HIGHER EDUCATION IN VIETNAM: AMERICAN – VIETNAMESE PARTNERSHIPS

Sheraton Saigon Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam January 15–16, 2009

CONFERENCE REPORT

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Organized by the U.S. Embassy, Hanoi, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, and the Ministry of Education and Training







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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conference Events

This Education Conference – organized by the U.S. Mission in Vietnam; Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City; and the Ministry of Education and Training – brought together almost 400 American and Vietnamese educators and officials for two days of discussions about how best to promote deeper linkages between American and Vietnamese educational institutions.

Those linkages support a number of educational goals shared by both countries, including increasing the flow of Vietnamese students to the United States; meeting the human resource needs of American and Vietnamese companies in Vietnam's modernizing economy; and improving the quality of Vietnam's system of higher education.

Welcome remarks by U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Michael W. Michalak highlighted the importance of education in the relationship between the two countries and noted many of the educational programs that the U.S. Mission operates in Vietnam. Remarks by Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan noted the importance of education in Vietnam's development plans, while those by Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City President Phan Thanh Binh described some of his university's linkages with American universities and colleges. On Day 2, Consul General Kenneth Fairfax welcomed the participants with remarks noting the many activities of the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City to support educational linkages.

Several of the Conference's seven sessions focused on the experiences of American and Vietnamese partners in launching and developing joint educational programs, including 2+2 programs and the Ministry of Education and Training's (MOET's) Advanced Program. Other sessions focused on what has worked best in promoting undergraduate and graduate study in the United States by Vietnamese students, and on ways to promote private-public sector partnerships to develop human resources in Vietnam.

A presentation by members of the U.S.-Vietnamese Education Task Force of the Task Force's preliminary findings enabled the Task Force to receive feedback from participants before finalizing its recommendations. The Task Force, created during a visit to the U.S. by President Dung in June, 2008, will present its Final Report to American and Vietnamese leaders in March, 2009.

The Conference also included an evening reception, hosted by the U.S. Consulate General, at which participants continued discussion in a more informal atmosphere.

Six informal breakout sessions were held after the Conference formally ended, enabling six organizations to share information on their activities with others.

Representatives from a wide range of American and Vietnamese organizations with an interest in education in Vietnam participated in the Conference, including:

| | American | | Vietnamese . | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | Institutions | Individuals | Institutions | Individuals |
| Educational Institutions | 60 | 102 | 71 | 128 |
| NGOs with Ed. Programs | 25 | 43 | 1 | 2 |
| Companies | 32 | 46 | 9 | 10 |
| Government Officials | 1 | 29 | 6 | 23 |
| TOTAL | 118 | 220 | 87 | 163 |

Results of the Conference

Through formal Conference sessions, informal breakout sessions, and networking opportunities between sessions and at the reception, American and Vietnamese educators became more aware of the wide variety of joint programs underway in Vietnam, and of the solutions that others have found to obstacles encountered by many participants. Important points made include ensuring that both partners are committed at the highest levels to the joint program, that both sides understand fully their responsibilities, that students understanding the terms of the program before enrolling, and that MOET simplify the procedures for establishing new joint programs.

Representatives of American companies also learned more about the educational and training activities of other companies, and of ways that they can work with each other and with Vietnamese universities to create courses and programs enabling students to acquire the skills needed by American and Vietnamese companies. Speakers from Intel, Rockwell Automation and Oracle noted that their programs provide financial support for schools through laboratories and teacher training, for students through scholarships and internships, and for themselves through the supply of graduates with the skills their companies need. They also noted that those programs with universities that succeed the best are those with open, honest communication from both sides and in which both sides demonstrated a sustained commitment to the program.

Another benefit of the Conference was the feedback that the U.S.-Vietnam Education Task Force received on its preliminary findings, thus enabling it to refine its recommendations before submitting its Final Report to the leaders of the two countries. Several participants noted the need to set priorities for systemic changes to Vietnam's educational system, while others urged that changes occur in many tracks simultaneously, including teacher training, English language training, support for private as well as public universities, and the need to upgrade salaries and teaching

conditions so that those educated abroad will return to teach at Vietnamese universities rather than work in the private sector. Many participants also volunteered to serve on one or more of the four advisory groups that will continue after the Task Force's life ends.

The Conference was a valuable opportunity for officials of the two governments to learn more about the wide range of ongoing joint educational activities in Vietnam. It also enabled them to learn more about the educator's concerns and areas where government action can help facilitate their joint programs.

Throughout the Conference, participants – from universities and colleges, companies, and governments – emphasized the critical importance of English language skills for Vietnamese students and workforce. Among the many ideas proposed for improving language skills were introducing English instruction earlier in primary school and broadcasting English language acquisition programs on TV and radio for adults. Universities and colleges with joint programs also noted that they have introduced English courses to prepare students for courses taught in English by American professors.

Conference Report

This Report is intended to capture the most important of the wide range of discussions that took place during the Conference. It is not intended necessarily to provide solutions, but to ensure that the information and ideas that arose during the Conference are widely available to those who might find them relevant for their own activities in Vietnam.

In addition to this Report, the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi is also preparing a comprehensive list of all American organizations with educational programs in Vietnam, information about those programs, and contact information for those in charge of them. That Report will be available by June, 2009.

WELCOME REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR MICHAEL W. MICHALAK

Dr. Bành Tiến Long, Standing Vice Minister, Ministry of Education and Training

Dr. Phan Thanh Bình, President, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City

Honored Conference participants,

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen!

It is with the greatest pleasure that I welcome you to this important Conference – *Higher Education in Vietnam: American-Vietnamese Partnerships*.

I want to say how pleased I am to see so many people in this room. I'm so glad that you all recognize the importance of partnerships between American and Vietnamese institutions in helping Vietnam meet the educational needs of its own society and those of the many American companies that are flocking to Vietnam.

This Conference is designed to promote more and deeper cooperation between American and Vietnamese universities, colleges, companies and NGOs by bringing their representatives together for two intense days of discussions about how best to reach key educational goals. Those goals include

- 1) Establishing more and deeper linkages and joint programs between American and Vietnamese universities and colleges;
- 2) Increasing the number of Vietnamese studying at American universities and colleges, especially Ph.D. students, and
- 3) Promoting educational programs designed to help Vietnamese students acquire the technical, analytical, and managerial skills needed in Vietnam's modernizing economy.

This Education Conference is the latest in a series of steps taken over the past year and a half to strengthen education cooperation between the U.S. and Vietnam.

Even before arriving in Vietnam eighteen months ago, I was aware that education is a key component of the relationship between the United States and Vietnam. I was aware of the importance of educational exchanges, and in my Confirmation Hearings called for a doubling of the number of Vietnamese students in the U.S.

(Incidentally, I just received confirmation that we might have already reached that goal – there are now more than twice as many Vietnamese students in the U.S. as there were before I arrived in Hanoi a year and a half ago – and I am happy to take

full credit for that accomplishment, though of course it is the result of much work by many other people, including many of you in this room.)

I was aware before coming to Vietnam that Vietnamese leaders, including Prime Minister Dung and President Triet, had requested American and other international assistance to help Vietnam train its next generation and modernize its educational system.

After arriving in Vietnam, I learned of the many American organizations working here in education. Discussions with many of you convinced me that the United States has much to offer Vietnam, but that there was no common understanding of the many programs and initiatives underway.

To develop that understanding, we convened the first Education Conference a year ago to gauge the scope of education projects carried out by American stakeholders. As a result of that Conference, we are all now much more aware of the activities of American organizations, and we can see much greater coordination between them, and between them and Vietnamese institutions.

Following that Conference, Prime Minister Dung consulted with more than a dozen senior American educators at an Education Roundtable during his highly successful June 2008 visit to Washington. Another outcome of that visit was the creation of an Education Task Force charged with producing joint recommendations for both governments by January, 2009 to strengthen U.S.-Vietnamese cooperation in higher education. The Task Force, composed of senior representatives from the governments, higher education communities, and businesses from both countries has met several times. The Task Force also created five committees to address-specific areas, including a roadmap for establishing an American style university in Vietnam, an exciting idea that I am sure is of interest to everyone in this room. Several of these committees will continue their work even after the Task Force's final report is completed. I encourage you to volunteer to serve on one or more of them.

I am very pleased that the Task Force will share its preliminary recommendations with you at this Conference before finalizing its Report to the Leaders of the two countries.

The U.S. government supports a number of programs to help Vietnam develop its human resources. I'd like to mention them briefly.

I'm very proud of our well-established Fulbright Program, which has helped more than 400 Vietnamese earn advanced degrees in the United States, while bringing hundreds of American professors to Vietnam over the past 15 years.

The Fulbright Economic Training Program (FETP) which for years offered a wonderfully innovative, intensive one-year economics program now offers a two-year Master's Degree in Public Policy.

The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) has already launched the studies of well over 200 Vietnamese scientists in Ph.D. programs in the U.S., and has recently launched a new program to bring American professors to teach in Vietnam.

Our StudyUSA Centers in Hanoi and HCMC, managed by the Institute of International Education (IIE), provide free information about American universities and colleges. In addition, IIE organizes several Higher Education Fairs in Vietnam each year.

The U.S. Commercial Service has staged a dozen "Virtual Fairs" to bring American universities and colleges together with Vietnamese education institutions that assist students interested in studying in the U.S. It has also set up a "Study USA" website that provides comprehensive and free information on study in the U.S. And, the U.S. Commercial Service is also part of the U.S.-Vietnam ICT Commercial Dialogue formed to promote closer cooperation between education institutions.

As a result of Task Force discussions, in the coming year, the State Department fill fund a number of educational exchange programs designed to assist the Ministry of Education in launching country wide university accreditation and certification programs.

And, the U.S. Agency for International Development recently brought an assessment team to Vietnam to make recommendations for initiating new AID programs in a number of educational sectors. More on this as it develops.

But back to this Conference –

Our conference sessions this year are designed to focus attention and discussion on the types of activities and partnerships already underway. Speakers will give short presentations on their experiences launching and developing their partnerships and projects, focusing on what has worked and what hasn't, and on the challenges encountered along the way and the solutions found.

There presentations will be short so that most of the time in each session will be available for discussion. I encourage all of you to keep your comments short so that as many people as possible can share their experiences and comment on the experiences of others.

In addition to the formal sessions, the Conference also includes six informal breakout sessions focused on more specific topics on Friday afternoon. I hope you will join me at the reception this evening at the U.S. Consulate General for even more relaxed discussions on U.S.-Vietnamese partnerships.

I want to thank the Co-Organizers of this Conference – Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, and the Ministry of Education and Training – who worked hard with the U.S. Mission to organize this Conference. In particular, Dr. Le Quang Minh, Vice President, Vietnam National University, HCMC and Dr. Trần Thị Hồng,

Director, Department of International Relations, at VNU, HCMC deserve our thanks for all their good ideas and hard work.

And I want to thank the sponsors of this Conference – Rockwell Automation, English Language Services, and the Sheraton Saigon Hotel and Towers – for contributions that made this Conference possible. Rockwell Automation's assistance made possible the reception that we will enjoy this evening, and assistance from English Language Services and the Sheraton Saigon made it possible for the Conference to be held in this beautiful location.

Perhaps you can judge from the length of my remarks that I am personally committed to expanding and deepening our education relationship with Vietnam. Doing so, I believe, is the surest way to ensure Vietnam's continued rapid economic development and to increase the friendship between our two countries.

I know that all of you are investing considerable time and resources to attend this Conference and I am really, truly grateful for your coming, and hope that you will find the discussions to be informative, productive, and enjoyable. I look forward to continue to work with all of you – as you work together – on the important educational goals we share.

Thank you very much.

WELCOME REMARKS (BY DVC) BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN THIEN NHAN

Dear Mr. Michael W. Michalak, the U.S Ambassador to Vietnam, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Ministry of Education and Training, I warmly welcome you, distinguished guests, educators, professors, business representatives, Vietnamese and American experts to this "Vietnam - US Higher Education Cooperation Forum"

Ladies and Gentlemen.

The past few years have seen significant progress in educational cooperation between Vietnam and the U.S. 80 American universities have established their partnership programs in Vietnam, more and more American professors and students have come to Vietnam to teach and study, and almost 10,000 Vietnamese students are now studying at various universities and colleges in the United States.

June 2008 also saw a landmark in educational cooperation between our two countries: the signing of the MOU between the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam and the U.S. State Department to promote the cooperation in higher education and establish the U.S. – Vietnam Education Task Force and witnessed by H.E. Nguyen Tan Dung, the Prime Minister of Vietnam.

As the result of this historical meeting, an Education Task Force on Higher Education has been formed with the participation of dedicated and experienced experts from both sides to identify key areas of cooperation, among them are the establishment of a Vietnamese – American University, the training of 2500 PhD Students at top American universities, the introduction and application of American advanced programs at selected Vietnamese universities, the creation of an effective, objective, academic-based system of accreditation of higher education and the supports for English language teaching for Vietnamese teachers and students.

I am very impressed to hear that more than 200 representatives from American universities, businesses and educational organizations are here together with 200 representatives from Vietnamese different business and educational institutions. This significant interest and attention to higher education cooperation between Vietnam and America promises future potentials and possibilities for more fruitful win-win cooperation in this area.

I am sorry that due to a very tight business schedule, I won't be able to attend the Forum but I sincerely wish that the Vietnamese and their American counterparts can put their heads together and work out solutions and draw up a roadmap for practical, achievable plans for future cooperation. I look forward to hearing fruitful reports from this Forum.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ambassador for his strong support for educational links between Vietnam and the U.S, thank you all for coming

to this Forum with your open minds, warm hearts, trusted friendship and a sense of construction.

I wish the Forum a success.

On the occasion of the New Year 2009, the Year of the Buffalo, I wish you all and your families the best of health, every success in life and at work.

Thank you for your consideration!

WELCOME REMARKS BY VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY HO CHI MINH CITY PRESIDENT PHAN THANH BINH

His Excellency Ambassador Michael W. Michalak, Prof. Dr. Bành Tiến Long, Standing Vice Minister of Education and Training Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Firstly, on behalf of Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City, I would like to express our great honor to welcome you to Ho Chi Minh City and to this particularly significant Forum on Higher Education: Vietnamese – American Partnership

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are witnessing a period in which globalization, together with the amazing development of science and technology is rapidly changing "the face of the planet" in both positive and negative tendencies. In this context, we all are aware of the need of cooperation in training scientists, managers and businesspersons with sufficient knowledge, skills, morality and responsibilities for the country, society and environment.

With an active policy of integration and a strategy of developing qualified manpower, Vietnamese Government has initiatively implemented the scholarship programs for training a team of young officials and talented students who will serve the socioeconomic development of our country in the period of renovation. As you may know, the success in 322 national scholarship programs and regional and local scholarship programs like ECV 1000, Ho Chi Minh City 300 (now Ho Chi Minh City 500), and advanced programs, etc are forceful evidence for the vision and the policies supporting the socioeconomic development and great achievements recording of our country.

In its future development, Vietnam still needs a great number of technical officials, leading experts, new majors and more diversified and rich training types.

The aforementioned policies have enthusiastically been supported by many universities and countries, especially the United States. As for the United States, the VEF programs, Fulbright program, the cooperative programs between Vietnam universities and colleges and American partners in research and development projects as well as the advanced and cooperative training programs are appreciably contributing to the development of qualified man-power of our country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In recent times, Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City has worked very actively and accomplished many encouraging results with the Universities of the United States, through the VEF programs, the advanced programs with the University of Illinois

and the University of Portland, the cooperative training program with Rutgers University and Houston University system, the ABET program with the University of Washington, and with many other universities of the United State. One example of the success in collaboration is The Center for International Education of VNU-HCM in collaboration with University of Houston Clear Lake have deployed many cooperative training programs, and sent hundreds students to US, many of them already graduated. In addition to the cooperative programs being implemented, Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City begins to execute more cooperation in training and scientific research with Turfs University, UCLA, Missouri University, CSU Fullerton, etc. Also, there will have many more similar cooperative programs resulted from this forum.

We strongly believe that the two-day forum will help both Viet Nam and the United States have far more opportunities not only to collaborate between the Vietnam National University and the Universities of the United States, but also to create many openings as well as specific and practical cooperative projects between Vietnam universities and colleges and the United States partners.

Being aware of the importance of the strategy in developing qualified man-power for the country and for itself, Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City, together with its members, has the honor to make contribution to organizing the forum. With other members of the organization committee, we will do our best for the success of the forum.

During the forum, except for the academic activities, you, especially the representatives coming from the other half of the world, should not forget to admire beautiful scene and enjoy rich and diversified culture of Vietnam as well as its mild and hospitable people.

With the special interest of Deputy Prime Minister cum Minister of Education and Training, with the close cooperation of the Embassy of the United States, with the enthusiastic participation, willingness to share experience and desire for cooperation of nearly 400 delegates, with the fully responsible preparation of the organization committee, with the active support of sponsors and with the silent contribution of a lot of officials and staff in the organization committee, we do believe that the forum will be successful

With that belief, I would like to declare the opening of the forum.

| Thank | you | for | your | attention. |
|-------|-----|-----|------|------------|
| | | | | |

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WELCOME REMARKS BY CONSUL GENERAL KENNETH FAIRFAX Day 2 – Friday, January 16, 2009

His Excellency Michael Michalak, U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Dr. Bành Tiến Long, Standing Vice Minister, Ministry of Education and Training Dr. Phan Thanh Bình, President, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City Honored guests,

Good morning, and welcome to this second day of the conference Higher Education in Vietnam: American-Vietnamese Partnerships.

With one day of discussions behind us, I can see that all of you have worked to apply the lessons learned at the Ambassador's first education conference, which was held in Hanoi last year. At that first conference, American stakeholders in Vietnamese education talked about the challenges and opportunities they faced while building partnerships in higher education.

Many excellent ideas came from those sessions, but we wanted to build on our success, not replicate it. For that reason, this year's conference is designed to highlight the collaboration of Vietnamese and American institutions in strengthening higher education in Vietnam, moving beyond ideas to concrete examples of plans, successes, and challenges. By bringing these bi-national partners on stage, we've moved from great ideas to stories of concrete success and practical guidance that will help other institutions as they develop new partnerships and intensify existing ones.

Here at Consulate Ho Chi Minh City, education is a key component of what we do. From the discussion yesterday, I can see you're aware that we do visas—a lot of them. But you may not know that in addition to doing visa interviews, our consular officers give presentations at schools and education fairs to demystify the process, so that students won't be unnecessarily afraid and will have the right information when they come up to the visa interview. Our Foreign Commercial Service is using technology to promote American schools through virtual education fairs and "webinars". Our Public Affairs Section manages many educational and exchange programs, including new opportunities for undergraduate students to visit the United States. And our StudyUSA centers, funded by the Department of State and managed by the Institute of International Education, provide free and unbiased advising and talk to students about study skills and other topics that will help them succeed.

We are adding our contributions to the work that the rest of you are doing to promote education in Vietnam. That includes the businesses that have set up scholarships and funded laboratories. It includes the great work done by the U.S. Vietnam Education Task Force and by forward-thinking Vietnamese government and university officials who are looking for creative ways to improve their country's educational system. And of course, it includes American universities who have offered their curricula to their Vietnamese partners, developed strategies to offer in-state tuition to Vietnamese students, or sent their professors to teach at and consult with Vietnamese universities.

Just like last year, this conference is sandwiched between Western New Year and TET. This timing reminds us that we need to put education at the top of the agenda for the New Year. And as we wish each other health, happiness, and prosperity, we should remember that the access to a strong and vibrant education system helps make each of those things happen, both for individuals and for the country as a whole.

Thank you and best wishes.

Higher Education in Vietnam: American-Vietnamese Partnerships Ho Chi Minh City * January 15-16, 2009

| | Thursday, January 15, 2009 |
|---------------|---|
| 8:30 – 9:00 | Opening Ceremony |
| | His Excellency Ambassador Michael W. Michalak |
| | His Excellency Dr. Nguyen Thien Nhan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education and Training (by DVC) |
| | Dr. Phan Thanh Binh, President, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City |
| 9:00 – 10:30 | Session 1: U.SVietnam Education Task Force – Preliminary Recommendations |
| | Vietnamese Representative: Dr. Banh Tien Long, Standing Vice Minister, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) |
| | American Representative: Dr. John Vaughn, Executive Vice President, Association of American Universities (AAU) Discussion |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | Break |
| 10:45 – 12:00 | Session 2: Partnerships Between American and Vietnamese Educational Institutions – What Works and What Doesn't |
| | Moderator: Professor Vo Tong Xuan, Former President, An Giang University |
| | Dr. Joe Hobbs, Chairman, Vietnam Initiatives Group, University of Missouri |
| | Dr. Nguyen Viet Thinh, President, Hanoi National University of Education (University of Missouri partner) |
| | Discussion |
| 12:00 – 1:15 | Lunch Provided |

| 1:15 – 2:00 | Session 3: Partnerships Between American and Vietnamese |
|-------------|--|
| 1.13 – 2.00 | Educational Institutions – 2 + 2 Programs |
| | Moderator: Dr. Le Quang Minh, Vice President, Vietnam National University, HCMC |
| | Dr. Ted Cummings, Dean School of Business, University of Houston, Clear Lake |
| | Dr. Truong Quang Duoc, Vice Rector, International University, Acting Director, Center for International Education, Vietnam National University, HCMC (University of Houston partner) |
| | Discussion |
| 2:00 – 3:00 | Session 4: MOET's Advanced Program – Key Ingredients for Success |
| | Moderator: Dr. Nguyen Huu Duc, Vice President, Vietnam National University, Hanoi |
| | Dr. Nguyen Thi Le Huong, Deputy Director General, Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education and Training |
| | Dr. Cary J. Trexler, Associate Professor, School of Education and College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of California, Davis |
| | Dr. Tran Duc Vien, Rector, Hanoi University of Agriculture (University of California, Davis partner) |
| | Discussion |
| 3:00 – 3:30 | Break |
| 3:30 – 4:30 | Session 5: Promoting Undergraduate and Graduate Study in the U.S. |
| | Moderator: Dr. Allan Goodman, President and CEO, Institute of International Education (IIE) |
| | Judy Irwin, Director, International Programs and Services, American Association of Community Colleges |
| | Mark Harris, President and CEO, ELS Education Services |
| | Discussion |
| 4:30 - 6:00 | Break |

| 6:00 - 8:00 | Evening Reception |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Host: U.S. Consul General Ken Fairfax |
| | Venue: U.S. Consulate General |

| Friday, January 16, 2009 | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 8:30 - 8:45 | Day #2 Opening |
| | Ken Fairfax, Consul General, U.S. Consulate General, HCMC |
| 8:45 – 10:15 | Session 6: Private-Public Sector Partnerships to Develop Human Resources in Vietnam |
| | Moderator: Rick Howarth, General Director, Intel Products, Vietnam |
| | Rachel Ding, Manager, University Partnership Program, Rockwell Automation |
| | Thai Ba Can, Rector, University of Technical Education, HCMC (Rockwell Automation partner) |
| | Ho Thanh Tung, General Director, Indochina Region, Oracle |
| | Dong Thi Bich Thuy, Associate Professor and Director, Faculty of Information Technology & Computer Science Centre, University of Natural Sciences, Vietnam National University, HCMC (Oracle partner) |
| | Discussion |
| 10:15 – 10:45 | Break |
| 10:45 – 12:00 | Session 7: Additional Subjects, Conclusion and Wrap-Up |
| | Dr. Banh Tien Long, Standing Vice Minister, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) |
| | His Excellency Ambassador Michael W. Michalak |
| 12:00 – 1:30 | Lunch provided |

| | Informal Discussions and Breakout Sessions |
|-------------|--|
| 1:30 - 3:00 | Breakout Session 1A: The California State University System and its Vietnamese Partners |
| | Moderator: Andrew Tran, Chancellor's Office, California State University System |
| | Breakout Session 1B: Helping Vietnam To Develop Emerging Science and Technology |
| | Moderator: Dr. Vo Van Toi, Executive Director, Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) |
| | Breakout Session 1C: ICT Human Resource Development and Capacity Building |
| | Moderators: Dr. Tran Duc Lai, Vice Minister, Ministry of Information and Communications; Don Nay, Counselor for Commercial Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Hanoi |
| 3:00 - 4:30 | Breakout Session 2A: Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City and its American Partners |
| | Moderator: Dr. Le Quang Minh, Vice President, Vietnam National University, HCMC |
| | Breakout Session 2B: U.S. Accreditation and Workforce Training in Vietnam: A Houston Community College and Saigon Institute of Technology Partnership |
| | Moderators: Gigi Do, Director of International Initiatives, Houston Community College; Dr. Rudy Soliz, Chair of Business Administration, Houston Community College; Mr. Nguyen Van Sau, Chancellor, Saigon Institute of Technology; Ms. Nguyen Anh Thu, Vice Chancellor, Saigon Institute of Technology |
| | Breakout Session 2C: Building Up Science & Technology Into a Vietnamese Private International University: Priorities and Challenges |
| | Moderator: Madame Ton Nu Thi Ninh, President, Tri Viet International University Project Founding Committee |

SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Session 1:

U.S.-Vietnam Education Task Force – Preliminary Recommendations

Vietnamese Representative:

Dr. Banh Tien Long, Standing Vice Minister, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)

American Representative:

Dr. John Vaughn, Executive Vice President, Association of American Universities (AAU)

In this session, representatives from the U.S.-Vietnam Education Task Force presented the Task Force's preliminary findings and received feedback on them from Conference participants. That feedback will be incorporated into the Task Force's Final Report, which will be submitted to Leaders of the two countries in March, 2009, and released to the public soon after that date.

The U.S.-Vietnam Education Task Force was created in June 2008 by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Vietnam and the Government of the United States. The Task Force was charged with producing a set of recommendations for both governments on ways to reach three principal education goals. The Task Force convened five advisory subgroups on key issues to draw in additional expert knowledge, and drafted a Final Report containing recommendations in eight subareas in support of the three principal goals.

- I. Encouraging more and deeper linkages and joint programs between American and Vietnamese universities
 - A. Roadmap to establish an American-style university in Vietnam
 - B. Vietnamese "Advanced Program"
 - C. Steps to clarify and simplify procedures to establish new programs in Vietnam by American educational organizations
- II. Increasing the number of Vietnamese studying at American universities and colleges, especially Ph.D. students
 - A. Ph.D. Study for Vietnamese students
- III. Promoting educational programs designed to help Vietnamese students acquire the skills needed in Vietnam's modernizing economy
 - A. General Skills and Knowledge
 - B. English Language Acquisition
 - C. Accreditation and Testing
 - D. Public-Private Partnerships

Dr. John Vaughn and Standing vice Minister Dr. Banh Tien Long presented brief summaries of the Task Force's key recommendations.

On the goal of establishing an American-style university in Vietnam, Vice Minister Long explained that:

- The GVN will provide funding and develop the campus.
- Vietnam looks to Americans to staff and operate the university for most of its first ten years.
- The Task Force is preparing a proposal to present to interested American universities and potential investors.
- The goal of the university is to create an environment that supports faculty research and attracts high quality students.

And Dr. Vaughn noted that:

- An American-style university in Vietnam would need a number of university partners, including one U.S. University that would agree to be the "anchor university."
- The Task Force recommends that the first step would be to establish a high quality undergraduate institution that over time would grow into a research university.
- The nature of the U.S. educational system must be taken into account when discussing American assistance. Because the U.S. educational system is separate from the federal government, the Department of Education can't just order universities to partner with Vietnam. Individual universities have to be persuaded to engage in linkages.
- Similarly, the U.S. educational system is very differentiated and disaggregated. Graduate institutions, public/private baccalaureate institutions, major research universities, and community colleges all have different mandates and efforts to establish an American-style university in Vietnam must tap into all four types for assistance.
- This project will need a lot of funding. The GVN will supply some, public-private partnerships may help, USG *may* be able to chip in some small way, and US universities may be able to make in-kind contributions. This is a very inauspicious time to raise funds. We will need concrete proposals to attract funds, and the pace may not be what we could like it to be, but we need to press forward.

On the goal of expanding and improving MOET's Advanced Program, Vice Minister Long and Dr. Vaughn noted that:

• MOET's Advanced Program is "conceptually sound and potentially powerful," with a goal of transplanting high quality foreign faculty into Vietnamese faculty using curriculum.

On the goal of clarifying and simplifying procedures to establish new programs in Vietnam by American educational organizations, they noted that:

• MOET recognizes the need to clarify and simplify procedures and is already making many changes.

On the goal of increasing the number of Vietnamese studying at American universities and colleges, especially Ph.D. Students, they noted that:

- The number of Vietnamese students in the U.S. is growing "faster than any other country in the world," according to the most recent IIE Open Doors Report.
- The Task Force agrees with the importance of boosting the number and quality of Ph.D.s, but also suggests that Vietnam focus on increasing the number of BA and MA holders as well.
- The Vietnam Education Foundation is doing good work and should continue.
- U.S. community colleges can serve as gateways to higher education in the U.S. and also provide workforce training for Vietnam.
- MOET is sending Ph.D. candidates abroad in order to build up a highly-trained group of professors for the Vietnamese system, and aims to have 20,000 professors within 12 years. Of these, 10,000 will be trained abroad.

On the goal of promoting general skills and knowledge in Vietnamese universities, they noted that:

- Systemic educational reform is needed in Vietnam.
- Reform of the entire system of education is a high priority for the Government of Vietnam, and the education law is in the process of being amended.
- It is important to have a better match between skills acquired through formal education and the needs of industry and business.
- Meeting Vietnam's educational goals requires a fundamental change in the organization and management of Vietnamese universities. The new system will have to have three characteristics:
 - Autonomy. Universities are better equipped than the government to make changes in things like promotion, tenure, salary structures, and curricula. Greater autonomy will facilitate American colleges to send faculty to Vietnam and will encourage Vietnamese Ph.D.s to return to Vietnam. MOET understands this, and changes are underway.
 - Accountability. Universities must provide assurances to the government and public that things are being managed responsibly and effectively. This governance could be provided by a board of governors or trustees, which may include government representatives. Still, members of the board can be appointed by the government but not controlled.
 - Accreditation. Accreditation will not only help strengthen universities, but also document internationally recognized quality.
- Dr. Vaughn highlighted the importance of creating institutional autonomy, investing in facilities for front-line research, and changing the reward structure. He said it was difficult to make progress on the whole set of recommendations and that at times they faced a "horse and cart problem."

On the goal of improving English language acquisition, they noted that:

• Focus on English-language acquisition programs can include the use of TV and radio programs, and should focus on oral communication.

• MOET has plans to increase the English language skills of both faculty and students, beginning at the elementary school level.

On the goal of subject of university accreditation and teacher testing, they noted that:

- Accreditation is an important issue, and MOET sees the benefit of having a strong, non-governmental accreditation agency.
- The Task Force recommends that MOET work with the council for Higher Education Accreditation to build a similar system in Vietnam.
- The U.S. State Department will organize professional development exchange programs to help Vietnamese officials set up university accreditation and educational testing bodies.

On the goal of establishing public-private partnerships, they noted that:

• Ambassador Michalak has formed an advisory committee on private-public partnerships to build workforce skills. Intel's Rick Howarth will chair the group.

Dr. Vaughn and Vice Minister Long noted that "Now the real test comes—turning plans into actions." The Task Force believes that several issues in particular need further attention and recommends that several advisory groups similar to those that submitted Reports to the Task Force remain in existence after the Task Force itself expires in January, 2009. Among these are:

- An advisory group to further develop the American-style University Roadmap, including advising MOET on drafting a proposal that could be used to generate interest among potential American university partners and funders.
- An advisory group on private-public sector cooperation to identify steps that can be taken immediately to address the unmet demand of Vietnam's growing economy for workers and managers with internationally competitive skills.
- An advisory group to review sources of funding to support the recommendations and roadmaps in this Report, and prepare proposals to be used in approaching potential funders.
- An advisory group on regulatory reform to ensure broader understanding of the types of reforms needed in the Vietnamese educational system to strengthen higher education cooperation with the United States, and the roadmap being planned to implement these reforms.

The following points were raised during the discussion:

- The Task Force Final Report will be available in March, and will be sent to all participants at this Conference.
- It is important for an educational plan to be more than a statement of goals; it must also identify priorities and resources for reaching goals.
- It is important to ensure that Vietnam's teachers are used in the most productive way possible, and also to establish programs to upgrade their teaching skills.

- One participant noted the importance of private, as well as public, universities
 in Vietnam, and that they also need assistance. Don't forget about them! Dr.
 Long responded that the Task Force focuses on government linkages for all
 types of universities, and that MOET doesn't set limits on the number of private
 universities.
- Dr. Vaughn agreed that prioritization is important, but also said that Task Force's recommendations are comprehensive and should be implemented in parallel at the same time in many different areas.
- He also noted the importance of retraining existing professors and teachers.
 One possibility is to allow a Vietnamese professor who wants to change
 direction to pair with a mentor and/or participate in a 3-year program 1-year
 of guided reading and a 2-year post doctorate in the United States. Dr. Long
 noted that MOET had some modest retraining programs, but that this would be
 a huge undertaking. He said that many new lecturers are studying abroad to take
 over from the older teachers, "so it is important to change the new generation."
- Cao Cong Nghiep, from Los Angeles, noted that the discussion so far has focused on long-term policy but not at the short term. Textbook, program, and teachers are all important. The first two are easy to change, but also critical is changing teacher-student interaction. We need to provide teacher training *immediately*.
- Dr. Long noted that short-term changes take place on a daily basis. New cooperative agreements are constantly signed. The Ph.D. goal really only requires around 250 of those candidates be trained in the U.S. per year, so it is a very modest goal. Vietnamese rectors are working on a daily basis to change their curriculum and are sent abroad (to the US, Australia, Singapore, Japan, etc.) for two-week refresher courses and training in Vietnam by foreign faculty.
- Dr. Hai Tran, US GAO, noted that during the GVN's license process for foreign business investment, government should include a requirement that the company have a work-study/internship program. GVN also needs to make more use of open courseware programs to avoid IPR issues. It's important to ensure that training start now so that returning Ph.D.s will have technicians and support staff.
- Dr. Long responded that MOET has already made strides in using open courseware. Internships are still limited—there is only a two-month technical training system built in. He agrees it is important to link businesses with schools.
- Steve Maxner, Texas Tech University and Chairman of the Board, Vietnam Education Foundation, noted that infrastructure is a huge issue. VEF now has 30 alumni in Vietnam, but around 75% have gone into the private sector instead of universities. "We are concerned; we want them placed at universities where they can contribute to higher education in Vietnam." The educational system needs to change to welcome and accommodate the needs of these Ph.D.s.

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Session 2:

Partnerships Between American and Vietnamese Educational Institutions – What Works and What Doesn't

Moderator:

Professor Vo Tong Xuan, Former President, An Giang University

Speakers:

Dr. Joe Hobbs, Chairman, Vietnam Initiatives Group, University of Missouri Dr. Nguyen Viet Thinh, President, Hanoi National University of Education (University of Missouri partner)

Professor Vo Tong Xuan, former President of An Giang University opened the Session by introducing the speakers and welcoming the audience. He asked the presenters to address problems encountered and solutions found to them.

Dr. Hobbs and Dr. Thinh made the following points about their joint program:

- Dr. Hobbs said that his program was launched three years ago and that Vietnam is now the University of Missouri's "number one overseas priority." This status for Vietnam stemmed from the Provost's having met Vietnamese Prime Minister Dung during his visit to the U.S. in June, 2008.
- University of Missouri (UM) has a 1+1 program in geography and is considering launching another 1+1 program in Vietnam with the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO).
- Importance of having buy in and support from university leadership, not just one department.
- Importance of having both parties share the same goals for the program and understand their roles in working toward them
- Importance of the preparation period before a program is launched. This period should last at least one semester, and lays the groundwork in issues such as cross cultural understanding and communication, classroom methods, and design of courses to be taught.
- Dr. Thinh said that the teacher exchange program is working well. His university provided housing and local transportation for the UM professors who taught at his university for one semester. A geography teacher from the Hanoi University of Education is preparing to go to the UM for one semester.
- After a first semester at HNUE, 1+1 students spend a year at UM, which requires a 550 TOEFL. HNUE accepts those with a 500 TOEFL with the expectation that they will receive a score of 550 after one semester of studying geography and English.
- Vietnamese students at UM receive a "special orientation" followed by "consistent and sustained mentoring" through their program, including a focus on preparing them for repatriation to Vietnam.
- Dr. Thinh suggested that tuition fees should be waived "to meet realities" of Vietnamese students. Dr. Hobbs said it was hard to do because UM had made the decision to accept Vietnam as an equal partner. It is possible to

- give in-state tuition and waive fees only because Vietnam is regarded as a "strategic priority" supported by top UM leaders.
- Dr. Thinh noted the need for program design to be "flexible." Dr. Hobbs agreed, saying that was why the 1+1 had become 1 semester + 1 year + 1 semester (back in VN). Students begin to write their thesis in their second semester at UM, finish it back in VN, and defend it via teleconference. Thesis topics must be directly related to Vietnam and be on a topic useful to the students once they return to Vietnam. It is expected that their studies help meet Vietnam's goals and societal needs, including the improved use of English.
- English language ability is a problem when UN professors teach in Vietnam. Only about 60% of the UM professor's lectures are "comprehensible to students." Unofficial interpreters can help but are not an ideal solution.
- It is difficult for U.S. faculty to teach for a full semester, and stints of two to three weeks are not long enough. UM had to make a "special arrangement" to enable a UM professor to be released for a semester to teach in Vietnam. But it is a problem to get more than a small number of teachers released to do this.

These points were made during the discussion:

- Neal Newfield, West Virginia University, commented on his experiences in the early stages of setting up a master's degree in social work in An Giang: "I envy you on how smoothly things are going and agree that administrative support at the 'highest levels' of one's university is crucial." His bosses tell him, "don't lose money, at least!"
- One obstacle he faces is that of "equivalency." Because social work and other programs need to be licensed by MOET, how is it possible to ensure that course content in Vietnam is equivalent to that at the American campus? This problem affects all programs set up under MOET's 322 program.
- Le Van Hoa noted the problem of Vietnamese finding a suitable place to use their new skills after returning from training in the U.S.
- A Fulbrighter from UC Berkeley suggested sending teaching assistants or graduate students to teach in Vietnam if sending professors is not possible.
- Patricia Oyler, Simmons College, noted the importance of libraries and laboratories and access to electronic resources. She said it was vital that students work with library specialists as they have had little experience with library services. Simmons College supports returning graduates by arranging annual seminars to keep them updated to help establish and maintain an "information infrastructure."
- A participant from Virginia Commonwealth University noted that U.S. Faculty going abroad need to be compensated and suggested that Vietnamese universities "pool resources" to help attract U.S. faculty and then share his/her time during the academic year.
- A participant from the USSH English Department said that Teaching Assistants from the United States are not sufficient to help develop the program; full professionals are needed.
- CSU System's Andrew Tran asked what criteria UM uses to measure success? Dr. Hobbs said the goal is to "produce professional geographers" who are

- "well-rounded" and can use their skills in a range of professions and make a good salary. Dr. Thinh added that graduates being accepted by other universities is also a sign of success.
- A representative of a U.S. school urged MOET to simplify procedures for setting up cooperation, and asked who else had received notice of a warning to pay a 5% tax on gross income. Dr. Hobbs was unfamiliar with the education tax in question and summarized the UM-HNUE approach to program affordability as setting it up at the local cost level in Vietnam and requiring only in-state tuition for the Vietnamese studying at UM.

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Session 3:

Partnerships Between American and Vietnamese Educational Institutions – 2+2 Programs

Moderator:

Dr. Le Quang Minh, Vice President, Vietnam National University, HCMC

Speakers:

Dr. Ted Cummings, Dean School of Business, University of Houston, Clear Lake

Dr. Truong Quang Duoc, Vice Rector, International University, Acting Director, Center for International Education, Vietnam National University, HCMC (University of Houston partner)

Dr. Minh noted that the Conference is conducted in both Vietnamese and English, and encouraged Vietnamese participants to speak in Vietnamese if they felt more comfortable doing so, as simultaneous interpretation is provided. He also pointed out that this session focused on all combinations of joint programs, not just 2+2 programs.

Dr. Duoc presented information on the International University's joint program with the University of Houston, outlining these key factors:

- Key factors for successful outcomes for the students are English proficiency and ensuring that students are enrolled in the program most suitable for them.
- Factors for success of the overall program include cooperation between the partner universities and strong commitments by both to the program, and making the best possible use of the Vietnamese and American faculty involved.
- Difficulties include the low standard of living in Vietnam and the difficulty of getting information about American universities.
- Also important are the need to be flexible in implementing the program and the need to consider other combinations besides 2+2 programs.

Dr. Cummings presented this information:

- University of Houston, Clear Lake (UHCL) is an upper division university that does not have Freshmen and Sophomores. It needs 2+2 agreements to succeed and is used to partnering with community colleges in the U.S. This experience and background makes it easy to enter into 2+2 programs with international partners.
- UHCL is now introducing a 1+1 Program for graduate level study, beginning with an MBA degree.
- Students coming for an MBA are moving into other programs (e.g. accounting, finance), which reflects the changing needs of multinational corporations and business community employers in Vietnam.
- UHCL has also introduced a Master's in Health Care Administration, with ties to the Texas Medical Center.

- UHCL has also just signed a new agreement with CIE for a 3+1 Program which enables students to complete three years of undergraduate work in Vietnam before completing the final year at UHCL and then receive a Bachelor's in Business.
- Keys to success include experience with transfer students, both institutions focused on programs and course quality to ensure that students in HCMC receive the same rigorous coursework as in Houston.
- Success can be judged by having 40-50 students at a time at UHCL; many Vietnamese students graduating with honors; placement rate/recruitment with good organizations, including many graduates entering careers in financial services, consumer goods, distribution and manufacturing.
- Future goals include increasing the rate of faculty coming to Vietnam, increasing student exchanges with American students studying in Vietnam. Course quality in Vietnam has developed to a high enough level for this to be possible.
- Vietnamese students at UHCL have a 90% success rate.

These points were made during the discussion:

- One participant said that Vietnam needs more programs in Agriculture. Dr. Cummings noted that Can Tho University has a partnership in this area with Auburn University in Alabama.
- The Rector of Can Tho University noted that it is important to prepare a safety net for students who ultimately do not qualify or are unable to go to the States after completing the first two years of a 2+2 program, so that they are able to complete their studies in Vietnam.
- Acceptance in 2+2 programs should be based on courses taught in Vietnamese, which will help more students to qualify (including less advantaged students).
 A 550 TOEFL would guarantee English qualification.
- Dinh Thi Ngoc Lien, Banking University of HCMC, provided these thoughts:
 - During Year 1, courses should be taught by foreign faculty using American methods. During Year 2, coursework should be in Vietnamese, so students have necessary background.
 - Not all students can make a successful transition; both sides need to work on solutions.
 - Students need exposure to foreign faculty from the first semester so they are open and ready for American methods requiring lots of reading and thinking on their own.
 - Concerns of parents need to be considered
 - There are problems with getting visas; programs need more support.
- Representative from MOET commented that:
 - It is best to take students who are already admitted to the university through usual procedures.
 - 2+2 programs must be transparent in providing information so students and parents can make informed choices.
 - There shouldn't be any problem with visas if students meet all the usual criteria, including financing.

- Ambassador Michalak noted that:
 - Regarding transparency, students and their parents must understand the criteria and conditions of the program, including the requirements for the final two years in the U.S., before entering into the program.
 - On the issue of visas, he noted that visa issuance is up 50 percent over the past two years.
- Dr. Cummings also said that UHCL's experience with visas had been very good, and that UHCL works closely with the university and often brings Consulate representatives with it when it meets university officials.
- Dr. Hien "Van" Tran from UHCL said that visas are not a problem, as 95% of applicants receive a visa. He also noted it is important that those receiving student visas actually enroll in the program for which the visa was issued, and not use their visas for other purposes.
- Thomas Morales, College of Staten Island noted the importance of encouraging American students to study in Vietnam; 2+2 Program should be reciprocal. Dr. Cummings agreed that reciprocal exchange is ideal; however, this does not exist for the UHCL Program, but American students do undertake informal visits.
- Dr. Hien "Van" Tran from UHCL commented that students in this program are very hardworking and very successful. The high cost keeps them motivated and dedicated to their studies.
- A former lecturer at the Medical University, Hanoi, commented that Vietnam needs true intellectuals. The training they receive should help students become intellectuals and then students should return to Vietnam to help the country establish pilot programs. Developing and increasing social consciousness of individuals is the responsibility of universities
- One participant commented that the Social Sciences is an area of weakness in Vietnam. The cultural content should come from Vietnamese lecturers while the technical content can come from foreign lecturers.

Session 4: MOET's Advanced Program – Key Ingredients for Success

Moderator:

Dr. Nguyen Huu Duc, Vice President, Vietnam National University, Hanoi

Speakers:

Dr. Nguyen Thi Le Huong, Deputy Director General, Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education and Training

Dr. Cary J. Trexler, Associate Professor, School of Education and College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of California, Davis

Dr. Tran Duc Vien, Rector, Hanoi University of Agriculture (University of California, Davis partner)

Dr. Nguyen Huu Duc welcomed all participants and introduced the session speakers.

Dr. Nguyen Thi Le Huong explained that MOET launched the Advanced Program (AP) in 2005 with ten pilot programs in Science and Technology, Business, and Agriculture with American and Vietnamese universities. Its goal was to create programs in Vietnamese universities using modern methodology, curriculum, and instructional practices. It is also implementing supporting programs to upgrade laboratories, libraries, and classrooms to create a supportive academic environment. In 2007 the second phase expanded the Program to 13 additional Vietnamese universities bringing the total number to 23. The AP has many challenges and achievements, and MOET welcomes advice, suggestions, and recommendations from Conference participants.

Dr. Tran Duc Vien presented the Hanoi University of Agriculture's experience with the Advanced Program in the Department of Crop Science that it launched with the University of California, Davis, in 2006. The mission of its Program is to reach these goals:

- Develop students into agronomists, scholars, mentors and responsible citizens for Vietnam, with skills and knowledge equivalent to the best universities in the region;
- Advance, integrate, evaluate and communicate knowledge of the sciences and technologies of natural resource utilization and conservation, agriculture, food, nutrition, environment, safety and sustainable concerns;
- Seek out, anticipate and lead in addressing the needs of farmers, local communities and governmental agencies in Vietnam, particularly in the Red River Delta.

Hanoi University of Agriculture (HUA) faced many difficulties in launching the Advanced Program, including

- Planning and coordinating UC Davis faculty visits;
- Learning from UC Davis lecturers even though English is not the language usually used in classes;
- A lack of financial resources to keep UC Davis lecturers for longer periods of time;
- Inadequate qualified teachers and resources;
- Vietnamese teachers being overworked and underpaid and lacking adequate skills in modern teaching practices, up-to-date knowledge and research skills;
- Inadequate classrooms and lack of research facilities;
- That the AP is focused on leaching only with no research support;
- students receive theory from the U.S. teachers who don't understand Vietnamese culture well;
- English language skills of teachers and students not high enough to understand everything presented by UC Davis faculty; and,
- Uncertainty about the stability of the AP in the long term.

To overcome these difficulties and achieve its goals, HUA will work with UC Davis to implement these projects during 2006-2011:

- Improve its curriculum, establish a standard study plan;
- Improve teaching methodology by training Vietnamese trainers;
- Assess the first graduating group to ensure the effectiveness and achievements of the program;
- Establish a Technical Committee to improve curriculum framework;
- Establish a HUA and UC Davis instructor group to implement the new curriculum and teaching methods;
- Build capacity in the new teaching method and student assessment at UC Davis;
- Upgrade classrooms, laboratories, tools, and equipment for the Advanced Program classes;
- Provide incentives for teachers to upgrade their research abilities;
- Provide more job opportunities for students; and,
- Improve their English language abilities through use of English as the language of instruction in more classes.

Dr. Cary J. Trexler gave a brief introduction into the University of California (UC) System, noting its high standard for admission and that seven of the system's 10 campuses are ranked in the top 50 universities in the world. He described how the AP with HUA benefits UCD as well as HUA by giving it a more international focus.

Factors UCD must take into account in launching the AP include:

- UC Davis faculty in Agriculture want to come to Vietnam;
- Pairing up faculty in UC Davis and HOA who have similar interests is a challenge;
- Regular UC Davis Ph.D. faculty can only stay for a short-term; however, graduate students could come to Vietnam for the long-term, but because Vietnam are status conscious, students only want professors with Ph.D.s teaching them;

- A different cultural perspective would benefit the program because regular faculty can only come during times when they aren't teach classes
- UC Davis has received three Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) Ph.D. students, one VEF Scholar, and one Fulbright Scholar.

Trexler identified the following difficulties with the Advanced Program:

- The biological science courses in Vietnam are not advanced enough;
- Vietnamese students don't have a high enough understanding of English to understand UCD professors;
- UCD faculty stay only a short time;
- The top-down teaching method in Vietnam limits students' willingness to ask questions or engage in discussions;
- More visits are needed by Vietnamese instructors to the UC Resource Center to learn new instruction practices;
- Changing the teaching methods is a cultural shift for students and faculty, and will take time;
- Knowing the AP budget a year in advance would enable UC Davis to help in planning;
- The program imported from the US is not of the same caliber when implemented in Vietnam;
- Another source of funding must be found to continue the Program when MOET's funding stops.

And he proposed these recommendations:

- The AP needs a Director who doesn't have another job and thus can focus on it full time:
- Students need advisors and information so that they know what is expected of them throughout the Program; now, plans change overnight and new information is not always communicated to the students;
- The minimum cut-off level for English language skills must be raised so that only students with adequate language skills are admitted;
- Classes should be smaller so students have one-on-one interaction with teachers.

The following points were made during the discussion on the Advanced Program:

- One participant said that his university has launched three new courses through its AP program in physics, brought 4-6 U.S. professors from Virginia and Ohio, and sent 19 faculty to Virginia to study. Teachers have improved their teaching methodology and English skills.
- He also recommended these steps by the American side to make the program more effective: invite U.S. faculty to teach English; have someone from the U.S. university be in charge of the entire Program; provide scholarships for Vietnamese students to study in the U.S.; conduct an evaluation of the quality of all aspects of the Program.
- Robert Connelly commented that a major problem in the Advanced Program is that teachers can only come from the U.S. to teach for two weeks at a time. To increase the length of time, some Programs will need to accept American faculty with less than Ph.D.s. Those with MBA in business or MA are also

- adequate teachers of most undergraduate courses. Expats in Vietnam are an untapped resource for Advanced Program.
- A representative of the Advanced Program with Buffalo University suggested that a network could enable all Advanced Programs to share materials and library resources. Video recordings of teachers' lectures, for instance, could be shared with many programs on the same subject, and on-line teaching would also enable more professors to participate. We also need Centers to help Vietnamese teachers acquire the teaching skills and methodology appropriate for the Advanced Programs. The AP methodology could be incorporated in other programs, thereby helping change the entire educational system in Vietnam.
- The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) has recently launched a program bringing U.S. professors to teach in Vietnam, some in person and some by DVC. Programs have been launched at VNU HCMC and in Hue. Lectures are also provided by DVD, which are then shown to and discussed with students by Vietnamese professors.
- Several participants noted the need for steady, predictable funding so that American universities can plan, and the importance of training Vietnamese faculty so that they can teach the American curriculum.
- The Education Task Force Final Report, to be released soon, has an in depth examination of the Advanced Program.

Session 5: Promoting Undergraduate and Graduate Study in the United States

Moderator:

Dr. Allan Goodman, President and CEO, Institute of International Education (IIE)

Speakers:

Dr. Judy Irwin, Director, International Programs and Services, American Association of Community Colleges

Mark Harris, President and CEO, ELS Education Services

Dr. Allan Goodman welcomed participants and opened the session by stating that advance preparation is the key to success in any serious undertaking, including studying in the United States. He noted that educational exchanges are uneven, with far more Vietnamese students going to the US than vice versa, and he noted the importance of having more American visit Vietnam so that they will realize that Vietnam is a country, not a war.

Dr. Judy Irwin reiterated Dr. Vaughn's comments in Session 1 about community colleges being a gateway to four-year programs as well as providing workforce training in English. She provided additional information about community colleges, including these points:

- There's a misconception that CCs aren't part of the higher education system. In fact, there are 1,175 community colleges in the United States with 12 million students. They issue 550,000 Associates Degrees every year, and train more than 50% of all new nurses and health care workers in the U.S.
- Community colleges are less expensive because they are mandated to be accessible. They focus on teaching, not research, and are known for their ESL programs.
- Vietnam is the #4 leading provider of international students to U.S. community colleges.
- Major partnerships between American community colleges and Vietnamese institutions include those with Houston Community College and Saigon Tech., and Seattle Community College, which offers distance learning and has trained over 125 employees of Vietnam Airlines on aviation maintenance.
- If MOET's programs are going to be truly effective, they need to train/retrain workers and focus on English.

Mark Harris noted that the decision by Vietnamese parents to send a child to study in the United States is perhaps that family's biggest financial decision and investment. It's an emotional decision made by parents who haven't necessarily traveled abroad themselves. He explained this issue further by highlighting:

- Students and families in Vietnam can *access* information but not necessarily *interpret* it intelligently. Because they need to ask questions (in Vietnamese) they often turn to agents.
- American International Recruitment Council sets standards for certifiable agencies; IIE/Education USA offers free advising.
- Universities should empower their in-country alumni (both Vietnamese and expats) to act as agents/answer questions.
- There are conscientious agents, but the United States hasn't recognized their expertise. New Zealand has, and pays commissions to agents while also limiting the fees they can charge students.
- Universities need to come to Vietnam to meet with agents and should fund agent visits to their campuses. The secret is recruiting students in Vietnam is to have an "agent" (whether alumni, IIE, or professional agent) who can provide information on the ground and in Vietnamese.
- Vietnamese students have different needs from students in other countries, and agents must be aware of them.

Key points made during the discussion include:

- USC guarantees all international graduate students a research or teaching assistantship. Students coming out of community colleges are of high quality; it's a great way to go.
- Vicky Foxworth, University of Maryland, asked Mark Harris what a reasonable commission would be. He said that most people say around 10% of first year's tuition, but it depends on the situation. \$1,500 is about the least an agent will accept.
- Dr. Tomas Morales, College of Staten Island, asked what considerations to Vietnamese families consider when deciding to send their child to study in the U.S. Mark Harris said that the biggest considerations, apart from funding, are cultural differences, living arrangements, and whether they have a friend/family member close by. There's a propensity for students to gravitate towards places they've heard about. Often those who need counseling are not top students. They need support, not prestige.
- Judy Irwin noted that EducationUSA centers and college fairs can help provide information. Some families have concerns about safety. 235 community colleges now have dorms, and other CCs can suggest apartments nearby or other arrangements.
- Quoc Tran, Claremont College, noted that per capita income in Vietnam is about \$2,600 per year. Many companies charge a lot of money for information about studying in the U.S., which is provided free in the United States by high school guidance counselors. What do we do with people who sell this information? Mark Harris noted that a new council is getting at this point through certification of agents. In Vietnam, many families want to have a local person who is contractually bound to help if their child encounters trouble in the U.S. even though they know that information is available free on the Internet and through EducationUSA centers.

- Ms. Thanh, SIT noted the difficulty of getting students out of their comfort zone and into their learning zone. Universities also need to be prepared to receive these students and help them adjust to American style education.
- Khoa Pham, VietAbroader suggested that CCs use alumni as agents.
 Universities can also make wider use of social networking (through Facebook, etc.)
- Mark Ashwill, IIE, noted that StudyUSA Centers in Hanoi and HCMC, operated by IIE, provide free, accurate and comprehensive information about studying in the U.S.
- 8,800 Vietnamese are studying in the U.S., and the number is growing by more than 40 percent per year. Vietnam is the 13th largest sender of students in the United States. The U.S. Embassy and Consulate issued about 10,000 visas in the past year.

Additional points made about how community colleges can help Vietnamese students:

- They serve as a "gateway" to a U.S. bachelor's degrees.
- They are part of American higher education.
- They are designed to provide a quality education to anyone who is seeking to develop their skills.
- They offer academic and technical/vocational programs.
- They offer the first two years of a 4-year program.
- They can help students in transitioning from high school to a four-year college or university.
- Their annual costs are about a quarter of what a year would cost at a traditional four-year college or university.
- They offer development of professional skills.
- They offer intensive English-language programs.
- They offer small class sizes and teachers who are focused on teaching.
- Graduates of community college two-year degree programs can find good jobs in the health-care field.
- Vietnam is currently fourth in the world in sending students to U.S. community college.

Additional points made about student recruitment that American colleges and universities should understand:

- Information must be available in Vietnamese so that parents, who might not speak English well, can understand what schools offer.
- Student and parents have concerns about how far away the nearest family friend or relative will be, health, safety, housing, quality of school, difficulty of transition to life and study abroad.
- Professional recruitment agencies overseas can bring linguistic and cultural expertise to help colleges and universities bridge potential gaps in their outreach.
- The American International Recruitment Council (<u>www.airc.education.org</u>) certifies agents. Other developed nations have certification programs for

- overseas recruitment agencies that involve travel to the U.S. so that they can better understand American environments, training programs, official certification and registry, and a commission program
- Other ways to engage in recruitment overseas include U.S. Alumni living and working overseas, and Vietnamese students who have returned to their home countries and who might be willing to represent their university.

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Session 6:

Private-Public Sector Partnerships to Develop Human Resources in Vietnam

Moderators:

Rick Howarth, General Director, Intel Products, Vietnam

Speakers:

Rachel Ding, Manager, University Partnership Program, Rockwell Automation

Thai Ba Can, Rector, University of Technical Education, HCMC (Rockwell Automation partner)

Ho Thanh Tung, General Director, Indochina Region, Oracle

Dong Thi Bich Thuy, Associate Professor and Director, Faculty of Information Technology & Computer Science Centre, University of Natural Sciences, Vietnam National University, HCMC (Oracle partner)

Rick Howarth noted that this session was significantly different from yesterday's panels because it focuses on education partnerships with the private sector. While not intended to undermine university to university partnerships, public-private education partnerships have three important aspects:

- Financial support through grants for laboratories, scholarships, curriculum enhancement, etc. (even in tough economic times, companies will continue to invest in education because it is the "seed of their workforce")
- Educational opportunities including student/faculty internships
- Industry feedback

Universities should remember that from the private sector's standpoint they are producing a "product." Universities need to understand that the transition from the university to the workforce can be tough and try to help students transition successfully.

Rachel Ding Rockwell Automation, began her presentation by noting that Vietnam, by joining the WTO, has increased the global market for its products and has created an easier business environment. She said that Rockwell is not only committed to the development of Vietnam's economy but to its educational system as well. Continued improvement of the Vietnamese educational system is key to unlocking the country's potential.

Rockwell has donated \$700,000 in laboratory equipment and scholarships to the Hanoi University of Technology and the HCMC University of Technical Education. This advanced automation equipment enables students to develop their abilities in an educational setting. Rockwell sees three key factors to expanding educational partnerships:

 Raising awareness of the benefits the partnership will bring to both sides (for example, Rockwell's success depends on the continued success of the Vietnamese economy);

- Open, honest communication from both sides;
- Sustained commitment from both sides to the success of the program.

Dr. Can noted that the University of Technical Education, HCMC, which is a partner with Rockwell Automation and which has 24,000 students, aims to train students to meet the needs of the market. Rockwell Automation, he said, has been very active in several ways to help Vietnamese universities provide students with the skills they need to find jobs in Vietnamese modernizing economy. It has set up laboratories, trained faculty in how to use automation equipment, provided scholarships, provided internships for students and faculty, and provided feedback on how university curriculum and courses can be revised.

Ho Thanh Tung introduced Oracle's programs at 25 Vietnamese universities, which are helping 24,000 students acquire software skills:

- "IT skill doesn't necessarily mean Oracle Skill." Oracle engages in education in several ways, including *Oracle Centers* (for their customers), *authorized education centers* (which provide curriculum and software to customers), *workforce development programs* (which includes student discounts and trainthe-trainer programs), and the *Oracle Academic Program*.
- The Oracle Academic Program has an MOU with 25 universities. Oracle software can be used for free, professors are provided with curriculums in how to teach the use of it.
- Vietnamese universities produce about 4,000 graduates each year but Vietnam's IT needs require around 20,000. And, more than 50% of new Oracle IT workers need to be retrained on Oracle technical skills and soft skills such as networking. There is thus a big need for more, and more suitable, training in Vietnamese universities.

Dong Thi Bich Thuy presented these key points describing VNU's partnership with Oracle:

- The partnership with Oracle includes professional IT training for any IT student in Ho Chi Minh City. Recent graduates can also take short courses that range from Office for Windows training to database management system training.
- The need to push for the use of only licensed software, which allows users to receive technical support and materials.
- The importance of offering the right type of training to students at the right moment to help them enter the job market.

Nguyen Trung Giang, Ministry of Finance, noted these points in response to a question from an earlier session about educational taxation issues.

• The government of Vietnam emphasizes financing education. In 2009, education will be the largest single item in the budget. However, this still isn't enough to fund all educational goals, so it is supplemented by a VAT (which educational institutions do not have to pay) and funding from the corporate income tax. Although the general CIT is increasing from 10% to 20%, the rate will remain at 10% for educational institutions, and deductions are also

- available for spending on education. New educational institutions will not have to pay CIT for the first 4 years after they are established.
- Decree 69 says that foreign firms investing in education will receive special treatment including tax breaks, land-use fee waivers, and reimbursement for land-clearance costs.
- In 2007, a new law passed so ensure that "no poor student will be left behind." Education loan criteria was expanded for poor students, and now nearly one million students have received student loans.
- The 10 pilot Advanced Programs have increased to 30 and expect to graduate 400 undergraduate students and 600 masters degree students per year by 2015.
- He recommends that a "Vietnam-American Foundation be set up to seek American financing for and U.S. assistance in revamping the Vietnamese educational system and for scholarships for Vietnamese students.

These points were made during the discussion:

- Lillian Forsyth, Volunteers in Asia, noted the need for companies to invest in English language education. Ho Thanh Tung responded by saying that Oracle understands the importance of English training and that workers lack English, presentation skills, and other soft skills. Students can be hired at Oracle and work for up to two years while getting outside training in these areas.
- Ambassador Michael Michalak asked about the kinds of internships are available and whether there is any collaboration among companies on educational programs. Rachel Ding noted that Rockwell intends to add internships once its labs are up and running. Rick Howarth noted that Intel, in the last two and a half years, has had about 120 interns on one and three month internships in the areas of finance, human resources, and technical areas. These programs introduce students to the corporate culture and allows Intel to evaluate their work.
- Ambassador Michalak asked if someone, maybe AmCham, could create an internships clearinghouse. Ho Thanh Tung, Oracle, said that Oracle has up to ten internships at a time, which include a two-month period overseas, and that these programs give participants the experience needed to be hired by Oracle.
- Gigi Do, Houston Community College. Noted that community colleges in the US have expanded their roles, and now including industry retraining. She recommends a similar program in Vietnam. Rachel Ding said that Rockwell would be willing to work with community colleges that have programs in automation.
- A representative from the Young Business People's Association (YBA) asked if the U.S. Embassy can help set up a Forum to enable it to work with U.S. industry to set up an educational institution. He also noted that private-public partnerships exist with foreign companies, and asked what steps MOET is taking to establish similar partnerships with Vietnamese companies.
- Ambassador Michalak welcomed the proposal, and invited the YBA to contact the Embassy's or Consulate's Commercial Section.
- Vice Minster Long explained that MOET is not limited in granting special conditions to businesses investing in education, and also supports the idea for private universities.

- U.S. Consul General Kenneth Fairfax asked the panelists if they have any insights to share in setting up programs similar to theirs, and if they encountered any roadblocks. Rachel Ding said that the roadblocks Rockwell encountered were the difficulty of finding information and, identifying the best partners, trust issues, and language issues. She said that Rockwell was able to overcome these obstacles through persistence.
- Thai Ba Can commented on the difficulty of finding students with sufficient English language abilities. Although they focus on developing English abilities at the university, after graduation many graduates still can't function in the language. It needs support from the private sector to set up additional English language programs. He said that the university has a great partnership with Toyota that could be used as a model for other programs.
- Bob Connolly suggested developing case studies to help out in Vietnamese business classes. Rockwell will explore this idea after the Conference is over.
- Hai Tran, U.S. GAO/GWU asked if MOET has any statistics on private-public partnerships and internships, and asked if the Ministry of Finance provides research and development tax credits to Vietnamese companies.
- He also noted that waiting until the college level to learn English is too late. It may be ok for technical staff, but students must master English at the high school level if there are to use the language effective as managers.
- Vice Minister Long explained that English language instruction begins in primary school, but that it will take 10-15 years to see the results of that investment. However, now that 90% of elementary schools in HCMC and 80% in Hanoi includes 8 hours per week of English teaching. MOET's goal is that 80% of university classes will be taught in English, but that it is tough to recruit and train so many English teachers.
- Dr. Vang, MOET, noted that six years ago, MOET began offering 1-year intensive English courses before university study. Students had to get a 550 TOEFL score for many programs and this pre-academic training was important. MOET also has a program in which students start an internship in their third year; as a result, many students were offered jobs before they graduated.
- Judy Irwin asked if the Ministry of Finance provided scholarships for study abroad. If study abroad included two years of community colleges, it would be much more cost effective. In addition, students who start at community colleges are often better equipped than students who complete their whole education at 4-year colleges.
- Dr. Toi, Vietnam Education Foundation, asked if individuals who contribute private funds to education also get a tax break? The Ministry of Finance replied that that currently they do not, but that it will look into the idea.
- Aileen Tran, Fulbright student asked Ambassador Michalak if the U.S. Embassy
 is interested in creating think tanks in Vietnam. They would be a home for
 some of the planned 20,000 returning Ph.Ds. He replied that that is a
 possibility, but that the Embassy probably could not provide funding directly.
 The U.S. Mission is already working with many think tanks that already exist in
 Vietnam.

Session 7: Additional Subjects, Conclusion and Wrap-Up

Dr. Banh Tien Long, Standing Vice Minister, Ministry of Education and Training

His Excellency U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Michael W. Michalak

Dr. Long thanked all moderators and speakers for their contributions, and noted the following large-scale projects that MOET is undertaking:

- Creating an American–Vietnamese University
- Expanding the Advanced Program
- Training 20,000 PhD faculty
- Programs to send faculty abroad for skills re-training and upgrading
- Developing private schools
- Rebuilding curriculum and instituting open courseware
- Adopting more learner-center teaching styles involving more active learning styles by students
- Creating a more attractive learning and teaching environment to attract Ph.D. recipients back to Vietnam.
- Plans to establish accreditation boards and testing/certification boards.

He also summarized thoughts he had during the previous sessions:

- The Education Task Force recommendations are useful in many areas, including general reform of the higher educational system, the advanced programs, establishment of an American-style university in Vietnam, training of 20,000 Ph.D.s comments on sending faculty abroad, training for existing faculty members, development of private schools, rebuilding the curriculum, open courseware, changing learning and teaching styles, and access to new materials.
- MOET is concerned about the library system in Vietnam. Libraries, the lungs of universities, need to be upgraded into useful working environments.
- Collaboration of 2+2 is a good design for Vietnam-U.S. cooperation. Need to attract more U.S. faculty to Vietnam for at least one semester, but use of Ph.D. or MA candidates as tutors is also appropriate. Need for more English teachers to prepare students for 2+2 study.
- Need for more focus on development of student's practical skills so that they are prepared for jobs in today's economy.
- Both sides are responsible for the quality of programs they are engaged in; need for an accreditation board to document and sustain high standards.
- Establishment of 50 Advanced Programs by 2015, and use of the programs to develop learner-centered teaching methods. These Programs will serve as models for all faculties at Vietnamese universities and colleges.
- Tuition of \$1,500 per year is needed to fund needed reforms. But if tuition is raised above the current level of \$200, many poor students won't be able to afford to attend a university. Need for universities to look for additional funding.

- Need collaboration of think tank research within the Advanced Program.

 MOET should provide more research funding, particularly to university faculty.
- More action is needed to promote community colleges. The U.S. model is good, as community colleges provide both technical training and prepare students to transfer to four year colleges. They are also appropriate places to provide English language training and other soft skills.
- MOET supports the idea of more private-public sector partnerships with Vietnamese companies. Need for increased joint cooperation between Vietnamese companies and universities.
- Need to support graduates of Vietnam Education Foundation programs. Need to create opportunities and incentives to encourage them to return to Vietnamese universities rather than private sector.
- Both the United States and Vietnam should work together to set up a foundation that can solicit contributions from American foundations for educational projects in Vietnam.
- MOET looks to the United States for assistance in developing community colleges, creating high tech education programs, curriculum design, English proficiency, and training and recruitment of faculty.
- Very pleased that so many people have attended the Conference.
- Thank you to Ambassador Michalak, American companies, and the many U.S. educators who have come half way around the world to participate in this Conference.

Ambassador Michalak said that what struck him most about this Conference was the tremendous response from Vietnamese academia and government, as well as from American academic, corporate, and other education stakeholders. At the Conference last year, 200 Americans met to get to know each other, set baselines, and discuss moving ahead in education cooperation. Once we had an idea of what Americans were doing, what their interests were, the Education Initiative was given a big boost by Prime Minister Dung, who went to the United States in June, 2008 to discuss concrete issues in education and other areas.

This year's Conference was an excellent midway point in his tour as the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam. It had more than twice the number of participants, and has addressed much more focused topics, such as 2+2 programs and the benefits of using community colleges to attract students to the United States. He noted that we've discussed in detail success stories and challenges in the 2+2, 1+3, and 1+1 Programs. And, we have heard many success stories and about many challenges, and about how American and Vietnamese institutions have worked together to overcome them.

Two other points stood out in his mind: The first is the number of people who commented on the importance of English language abilities for better, deeper, and more diversified cooperation going forward. The United States will work hard to get the Peace Corps here, to expand the Fulbright Program, and to encourage other volunteer agencies to think creatively about how to improve English language education and to maintain English skills after graduation.

One other remarkable thing about this Conference, he said, was that it gave participants the chance to ask questions of MOET and the U.S. government, and to receive answers. It was very valuable for him to hear directly from the participants what their needs are, what roadblocks and challenges they face that are blocking progress, and what the Embassy can do to help. He said it was very useful for him and officers to get that type of feedback, to set the record straight in some cases, and to learn where we can do better in others.

The Embassy is in the process of creating a comprehensive database of American organizations and institutions that are currently working in education in Vietnam. When completed, within a few months, it will become a valuable resource to increase collaboration and partnerships.

Ambassador Michalak then opened up the floor to other comments, ideas on next steps, and ideas for the next conference.

Lillian Forsythe proposed the creation of an online Vietnam Partnerships Best Practices Database that can be accessed by anyone interested in forming a partnership. It could outline the obstacles that educational institutions face in launching joint programs, as well as solutions that have been found to them. Ambassador Michalak responded that the Report from this Conference will be the beginnings of an effort to capture some of the things and it will serve as a starting point for this database. He also asked if there is a company or organization interested in making a donation to help launch this project. Perhaps \$10,000 would be needed for this project.

Another participant brought up the subject of magnet schools, which in the U.S. focus on development of specific disciplines and that are used as a resource in that area by other schools. Hawaii, for instance, has magnet schools for English language, information technology, tourism, and theater and the arts. Does Vietnam have such schools? He also asked if MOET has expanded teaching of information technology into primary schools.

Ambassador Michalak responded, noting that Vietnam has something similar called "Centers of Excellence." An American University could act as a type of Magnet School of information for other institutions. Standing vice Minister Long noted that four months ago the Vietnamese Government signed an agreement with Vietel to supply free internet to 30,000 schools, including all Vietnamese universities. This is the first step to supplying information technology to schools in Vietnam.

Laurence Roberts, Utica College, noted that delivering quality health care is a real challenge, which should be addressed by academic and the Vietnam Education Foundation. The main focus of this Conference has been getting support for Ph.D.s in technology, but we need to also focus on how to get support for Ph.D. work in health care, etc.

Ambassador Michalak proposed that the Conference next year have specialized sessions on specific topics such as health care that needs to be addressed. Bill Bate,

Fulbright Program Director at the U.S. State Department noted that the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program could be a way of addressing this issue. He encouraged American professors to take a look at the 2010 awards that are open to Health Care professors. Also available are award to U.S. lecturers in higher education, government, finance, and management. More information is available at www.cies.org and through the Fulbright Program at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi.

D. Nguyen, Northwestern Polytechnic, noted the need for a balance between education in the natural and social sciences. He also noted that programs need to be community oriented and meet local needs, and that Vietnamese students going to the U.S. need information about American culture so that they will feel comfortable living and studying in the United States and will share their Vietnamese culture with American students and faculty.

Noah Litton said that there was a "Pollyanna feel" to the Conference, which avoiding specifically addressing some of the tough issues. He said that the plan to educate 20,000 Ph.D.s by 2020 is achievable, but thought that they will opt to go into the private sector if universities don't provide a receptive environment for them. These Ph.D.s will face problems working at universities, as the chairman of their faculty might not want someone more qualified working under them. He recommended investigating how China and other countries that have invested a lot in education have handled this potential problem.

He also said many people are waiting for the new guidelines that will help them understand Vietnam's post-WTO accession policies. Current policies of the Department of Planning and Investment, he said do not allow investment in elementary education or overseas education consulting. He said that his investment company, which bought 80% stake of a Vietnam Education Company regulated by MOET, has encountered a lot of problems. These problems include problems with labor unions, problems in paying some teachers more than others, problems with the high cost of textbooks, high import duties on textbooks, and problems with getting approval for translations of textbooks. There is excitement about education and money to invest, but investors are less likely to invest when problems like these exist.

Ambassador Michalak responded, noting that these issues have been addressed and discussed by the members of the joint Task Force and their recommendations will be in the Task Force Final Report. The subject of investment in education—including what the regulations are and what the tax treatment is—is a very technical field that could perhaps be addressed at the next Conference. He also noted that there is still a need for a deeper cooperation between the two Governments; however, he has seen a lot of candor in all sessions as current problems have been raised and discussed. Some sessions at next year's Conference could be devoted to some of these specific issues, such as investment in education; and textbooks, which is a long term problem spanning Ministries of Finance, Security, and Culture.

Vice Minister Long responded by saying that there are all important issues that MOET is working on. Only half the 20,000 Ph.D.s will be trained abroad, and many of them will conduct research and training at universities. Dr. Hung responded,

noting that no one needs worry about what the 20,000 Ph.D.s will do. Right now we have only 6,000 Ph.D. teachers in Vietnam, and most were trained a long time ago and will retire soon. There are many colleges and universities that have no Ph.D. teachers. Also, to achieve our goal we have received commitments from different countries offering free scholarships to train Ph.D. candidates: Germany will train 850 Ph.D.s, Taiwan 500 Ph.D.s, Australia 350 Ph.D.s, and Russia has committed to train 100 Ph.D.s. We will be able to achieve our goal with this kind of support and cooperation.

One participant noted that there is an overlooked resource of about 10,000 Vietnamese American professors in the U.S. and other countries who could be used to train Vietnamese students in the United States they might also be interested, after retirement, in coming to teach in Vietnam. Ambassador Michalak noted that he has mentioned this possibility to every Viet-American group he has spoken to in the United States.

Another participant noted that there seems to be a lack of student input at this Conference. What about having a student delegation to present these partnerships next year in open and closed sessions? The students can share with each other which would empower them. Ambassador Michalak responded that we had a delegation from the University of Hawaii at last year's Conference, and we will consider having a session for students at the Conference next year.

Another subject for the conference next year might be fundraising – how have American universities done this; how do they finance their operations?

The Conference concluded with Ambassador Michalak and Vice Minister Long again thanking all the participants and reminding them about the informal breakout sessions taking place in the afternoon.

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CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Adams, Susan STAR Vietnam Project sadamshcmc@gmail.com

Agarwal-Harding, Dr. Seema Regional Education Advisor, USAID, Asia U.S. Embassy Bangkok sagarwal-harding@usaid.gov

Akers, Dr. Lex A.
Associate Dean of Engineering
University of Missouri
<u>akersl@missouri.edu</u>

An, Hà Văn Senior Officer Americas Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Anh, Trần Kim Chair, Pacific Links Foundation tkanh@pacificlinks.org

Anh, Dr. Nguyễn Minh Head HCMC College of Education

Anh, Trần Thị Tú
Deputy Head
International Relations
Hue University of Education
chec92@yahoo.com

Anh, Trịnh Duy Head, Training Reform Boad University of Architecture, HCMC duyanh54kts@yahoo.com

Ashwill, Dr. Mark
Country Director
Institute of International Education
mashwill@iievn.org

Bạch, Nguyễn Hữu

Senior Expert, Central Committee for Information and Education, Communist Party of Vietnam

Bate, Bill

Branch Chief, Fulbright Program
East Asia and Pacific, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State
batewa@state.gov

Bennett, Charles

Consular Section Chief U.S. Consulate General HCMC bennettce@state.gov

Bennett, Karen

Consortium of Global Education <u>karenb@mailcentral.biz</u>

Berg, Dr. Dennis F.

Professor, Department of Sociology California State University, Fullerton dberg@fullerton.edu

Bergerson, Peter

Professor of Public Affairs Florida Gulf Coast University pbergers@fgcu.edu

Berman, Dr. David M.

Associate Professor University of Pittsburgh dmberman@pitt.edu

Bhuvanij, Krienkrai (KK)

Executive, Governmental Program, Thailand & Vietnam IBM krienkr@th.ibm.com

Biddinger, Dr Patricia Ellen

Director, International Recruitment and Retention Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis pbiddin@iupui.edu

Bigalke, Dr. Terance W.

Director, Education Division

East-West Center

bigalket@eastwestcenter.org

Bình, Dr. Phan Thanh

President

Vietnam National University, HCMC

ptbinh@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Boyle, Patrick M.

Associate Provost

Loyola University

pboyle@luc.edu

Briscoe, Catherine

Consultant to West Virginia University

Social Work Partnership, Voluntary Service Overseas

Catherine.Briscoe@vsoint.org

Brown, Paul J.

Vietnam Program Manager

Office of International Affairs

Loyola University

paulbrown20@hotmail.com

Bui, Dr. Tung

Graduate Chair and Director of PhD Program in Int'l Management

Faculty Advisor, Executive MBA in Vietnam

University of Hawaii

tungb@hawaii.edu

Butler, Dr. Robert J.

Chairman

Phan Thi Group JSC-Education

bob.butler@phanthigroup.com

Cần, Dr. Thái Bá

President

HCMC University of Technical Education

cantb@hcmute.edu.vn

Canh, Dr. C. Nguyen

Assistant Vice President

AIG Life Vietnam

songycanh05@gmail.com

Châu, Bùi Minh Diễm Deputy General Director & Principal Cetana PSB Intellis International College diemchau@cetanapsb.edu.vn

Alpha Chen

International Marketing Director CT&D Group enlphachen@yahoo.com

Chi, Trần Nguyễn Hoài

Executive Director, International Initiatives Saigon Institute of Technology chitnh@saigontech.edu.vn

Chiến, Trần Thị Trung Former Minister Ministry of Health

Chứng, Ngô Đắc Vice Rector Hue University of Education

Chuyên, Dr. Trương Thị Kim

Vice Rector University of Social Science and Humanities Vietnam National University, HCMC chuyenttk@hcmussh.edu.vn

Clark, Bernice

Education Conference Liaison U.S. Embassy Hanoi clark b h@yahoo.com

Coggins, Mark

President, Asia Pacific Kaplan, Inc.

Connolly, Nicola

Operations Manager Manpower Vietnam nicola.connolly@manpower.com.vn thingoc.quyen@manpower.com.vn

Connolly, Robert T

Vice President, American International University Stellar Management Company BobinVN@gmail.com

Covert, Herbert

Professor of Anthropology University of Colorado at Boulder covert@colorado.edu

Coxhead, Dr. Ian

Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics University of Wisconsin, Madison coxhead@wisc.edu

Cranston, Dr. Pamela

Vice Provost for International Programs The Johns Hopkins University <u>pcranston@jhu.edu</u>

Crow, Andrew

Education Solutions Director, ASEAN Oracle Corporation Andrew.crow@oracle.com

Cummings, Dr. William Theodore "Ted"

Dean, School of Business University of Houston-Clear Lake cummings@uhcl.edu

Cường, Hoàng Văn

Head, International Relations University of Natural Science Vietnam National University, HCMC

Dan, Võ Xuân

Rector Assistant HCMC People-Established University for Foreign Language & Information Technology voxuandan@yahho.com

Đăng, Nguyễn Nhật

Vice Head, International Relations Hung Vuong University, Phu Tho

Dao, Joseph

Office for International Programs Representative in Vietnam Loyola University vdao@luc.edu

Đạt, Dr. Nguyễn Tiến Vice Rector

Tay Nguyen University

ntdattaynguyen@yahoo.com

Đạt, Trần Thịnh

Marketing Manager, Center for International Education Vietnam National University, HCMC

Dean, Stuart

President of GE ASEAN General Electric

stuart.dean@ge.com

Dickey, Angela

Deputy Principal Officer

U.S. Consulate HCMC

dickeyar@state.gov

Điện, Dr. Nguyễn Ngọc

Vice Dean, Department of Economics, University of Technology, Vietnam National University, HCMC

Ding, Rachel

Manager

Rockwell Automation

rhding@ra.rockwell.com

Do, Gigi

Director of International Initiatives Houston Community College gigi.do@hccs.edu

Do, James

VP Engineering Pyramid Software Development james.do@psdus.com

Doan, Dr. Patrick T

Dean

Northcentral University

pdoan@ncu.edu

Doanh, Nguyễn Quý

International Relations

HCMC University of Transportation

ut-hcmc@hcmutrans.edu.vn

Du, Dr. Nguyễn Văn

Head, International Relations & Research Office General Secretary of Advanced Program Thai Nguyen University of Technology vandu@tnut.edu.vn

Dũng, Dr. Hoàng

Director, Department of Science and Technology Vietnam National University, HCMC hdung@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dũng, Dr. Nguyễn Tiến

Head, Administration Division Vietnam National University, HCMC ntdung@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dũng, Trần Bá Việt

Director General, International Cooperation Department Ministry of Education and Training tbvdung@moet.edu.vn

Duy, Nguyễn Anh

Vice Dean, Faculty of Electrical Engineering Da Nang University of Technology naduy@dut.udn.vn

Đức, Dr. Đặng Ngọc

Chief, International Finance Department, Banking and Finance Faculty Hanoi National University of Economics dangocduc@hn.vnn.vn

Đức, Dr. Nguyễn Hữu

Rector

University of Technology, Vietnam National University, Hanoi ducnh@vnu.edu.vn

Đức, Nguyễn Mạnh Thuần

Information Resource Center U.S. Consulate General HCMC nguyenmtd@state.gov

Được, Dr. Trương Quang

Vice Rector, International University Vietnam National University, HCMC tqduoc@hcmiu.edu.vn

Engel, Dr. Sandra Ann

Head, Humanities, Director, International Education Mohawk Valley Community College sengel@mvcc.edu

Engelbrecht, Ted

LCMS World Mission tengel@keptprivate.com

Engstrom, Dr. Royce

Provost

University of Montana

royce.engstrom@umontana.edu

Engstrom, Mary

Associate Director, Instructional Design and Development University of Montana

Enthoven, Andrew

Laureate Education Inc.

Andrew.Enthoven@laureate-inc.com

Fairfax, Ken

Consul General U.S. Consulate General HCMC fairfaxkj@state.gov

Forsyth, Lillian

Vietnam Program Director Volunteers in Asia vietnam@viaprograms.org

Foxworth, Vicky

Director, Center for Leadership and Organizational Change University of Maryland foxworth@umd.edu

Frendreis, John

Professor, Department of Political Science Loyola University <u>jfrendr@luc.edu</u>

Ga, Dr. Bùi Văn

President
Da Nang University
buivanga@dng.hnn.vn

Gettman, Lowell
Chief Representative
MS Global Finance LLC
lowell.msgf@gmail.com

Giang, Luong
Intel Product Vietnam
giang.luong@intel.com

Giang, Nguyễn Commonthwealth of Pennsylvania, Hanoi Office pavietnam@paasean.com

Giang, Nguyễn Ngân Head, International Relations College of Transportation No.3 giangnguyen_ct3@yahoo.com

Giang, Nguyễn Thị
Vice Rector
Vinh Long College of Finance and Economics
ntgiangvcef@yahoo.com.vn

Giang, Nguyễn Trường Division Chief, Public Expenditure Department Ministry of Finance

Giang, Dr. Trịnh Trường Rector HCMC University of Agriculture and Forestry

Giaras, Chris
Director of Business Development
RMIT International University Vietnam
chris.giaras@rmit.edu.vn

Giàu, Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Vinh Long Community College ngocgiau360@yahoo.com

Goodman, Dr. Allan E.
President and CEO
Institute of International Education
agoodman@iie.org

Hà, Dr. Dương Mộng Director, International Relations Da Nang University dmha@ud.edu.vn

Hà, Đỗ Việt

Officer, Human Resource Development, HCMC Office Ministry of Education and Training dvha@moet.edu.vn

Hà, Lưu Nguyễn Thu

Director

ATV Vietnam

haluu@atv-vietnam.com

Hà, Nguyễn Thúy

Specialist, Natural Science National Foundation for Science & Technology Development ntha20@most.gov.vn

Hà, Quản Duy Ngân

Director General, International Relations Department Ministry of Information and Communication gdha@mic.gov.vn

Hà, Dr. Trần Thi

Director General, Higher Education Department Ministry of Education and Training ttha@moet.gov.vn

Hà. Trần Thu

Head, International Relations HCMC University of Technical Education thuha@hcmute.edu.vn

Hà, Augustine Tôn Vinh

President and CEO Stellar Management AugVinh@aol.com

Hà, Xuân Trung

Chairman

Stellar Management

ha.trung.openled@gmail.com

Hạ, Đỗ Văn Rector Hai Phong Community College dvha hpcc@yhaoo.com

Hải, Dr. Trần Quang Vice Rector College of Foreign Languages Da Nang University tghai@ud.edu.vn

Håi, Trương Thanh Chief, Statistic Division Department of Planning and Finance Ministry of Education and Training tthai@moet.gov.vn

Hải, Dr. Vũ Đăng Rector Da Nang College of Economics and Planning tcdktkh@hcm.vnn.vn

Hammett, Katherine Director, International Education Carroll University khammett@carrollu.edu

Handler, Howard Country Director, U.S. AID U.S. Embassy Hanoi hhandler@usaid.gov

Hanh, Phạm Bá Deputy Director University of Forestry hanhphamba@voctech-dn.edu.vn

Hạnh, Dr. Phạm Thị Minh Chief, International Relations Binh Thuan Community College ptminhhanh@gmail.com

Hanh, D. Le-Griffin Research Faculty University of Southern California hdle@usc.edu

Harris, Mark

President and CEO English Languages Service mark.harris@berlitz.com

Hayes, Dr. Robert

Vice President Academic Affairs Westfield State College rhayes@wsc.ma.edu

Helm, Ann

Executive Director, Center for International Service College of Staten Island City University of New York helm@mail.csi.cuny.edu

Henchy, Dr. Judith

Head, Southeast Asia Section University of Washington Libraries University of Washington judithh@u.washington.edu

Heryford, Michele

Managing Director, Asian Studies Center University of Pittsburgh ferrier@pitt.edu

Hiền, Lê Thị Thanh

Information Assistant U.S. Consulate General HCMC letth@state.gov

Hiền, Nguyễn Thanh

Office Assistant
U.S. Embassy Hanoi
nguyentx@state.gov

Hiền, Nguyễn Thu

Vice Dean, Water Resources Engineering Faculty Water Resources University hien@wru.edu.vn

Hiền, Phan Thi Thu

General Director Phan Thi Group JSC-Education hien.phan@phanthigroup.com Hiển, Võ Hoàng Specialist of International Marketing Phu My Hung Corporation hoanghien@pmh.com.vn

Hiệp, Nguyễn Quang Vice Dean Foreign Trade University <u>hiebiz@yahoo.com</u>

Hiếu, Hoàng Minh EducationUSA Advisor Institute of International Education

Hiếu, Thiều Trung
Program coordinator
Executive MBA program in HCMC
University of Hawaii
thieu@hawaii.edu

Higgins, Rylan
Director, CET Academic Programs
University of Arizona
rylan@email.arizona.edu

Hinh, Lê Văn
Officer, International Relations Department
Vietnam National University, HCMC
lvhinh@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Hoan, Dr. Nguyễn Song Vice President Hong Duc University, Thanh Hoa City songhoan 2000@yahoo.com

Hoàng, Chế Đình Vice rector Hanoi Architecture University pth@hn.vnn.vn

Hoàng, Ha Thanh Group Vice-President/General Manager Millennium Global Solutions Group hoanghathanh@gmail.com

Hoàng, Trần Thanh

Deputy Chief, International Relations Ba Ria – Vung Tau College of Education <u>tranhoang23767@yahoo.com</u>

Hoàng, Vũ Thị Minh

Director Qualcomm International hvu@qualcomm.com

Hobbs, Dr. Joe

Chairman, Vietnam Initiatives Group, University of Missouri hobbsj@missouri.edu

Hồng, Dr. Trần Thị

Director, Department of International Relations Vietnam National University HCMC hongtt@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Howarth, Rick

General Manager Intel Products, Vietnam rick.a.howarth@intel.com

Hudzik, Dr. John

Vice President, Global Engagement & Strategic Projects Michigan State University hudzik@msu.edu

Hull, Toni

English Language Fellow U.S. Department of State toni hull2002@yahoo.com

Hùng, Dr. Bùi Mạnh

Vice Dean
HCMC University of Education
hungduy@hcm.fpt.vn

Hùng, Dr. Nguyễn Mạnh President

Hong Bang University

Hùng, Dr. Nguyễn Mộng Rector

Van Hien University

Hùng, Dr. Nguyễn Ngọc

Deputy Director General, International Cooperation Department Ministry of Education and Training nnhung@moet.gov.vn

Hùng, Nguyễn Văn

Vice Rector

University of Transportation No.2

hoxuanba@gmail.com

Hưng, Dr. Nguyễn Phan

Rector

Binh Thuan Community College

hung nguyenphan@yahoo.com

Hưng, Dr. Nguyễn Lê

Vice Rector

HCMC University of Agriculture and Forestry

lehungn@gmail.com

Hương, Đỗ Thu

Fulbright Program

U.S. Embassy Hanoi

doht@state.gov

Hương, Dr. Nguyễn Thị Lê

Deputy Director General, Higher Education Department

Ministry of Education and Training

ntlhuong@moet.gov.vn

Hưu, Dr. Nguyễn Văn

Senior Officer, Higher Education Department

Ministry of Education and Training

Huy, Nguyễn Quang

Director of Sales & Marketing

Cetana PSB Intellis International College

quanghuy@cetanapsb.edu.vn

Irwin, Judith T.

Director, International Programs & Services

American Association of Community Colleges

jirwin@aacc.nche.edu

Ison, Sunshine

Deputy Public Affairs Officer

U.S. Consulate General HCMC

isonas@state.gov

Jacob, Dr. W. James

Director, Institute for International Studies in Education University of Pittsburgh wjacob@pitt.edu

Johnson, Tina Phillips

Assistant Professor, Director of Chinese Studies, St. Vincent College tina.johnson@stvincent.edu

Johnstone, Robert

English Languages Service

Jones, Bryan

Marketing Manager AAE System Inc. bryanj@aaesystem.com

Kauffman, Minh

Director, Center for Educational Exchange Vietnam–American Council of Learned Societies mkauffman@ceevn.org

Keshap, Rahul

Director, AP Strategy and Operations CFA Institute rahul.keshap@cfainstitute.org

Khanh, Nguyễn Mai

Lecturer, Faculty of Economics & International Relations Foreign Trade University ktkdqt.ftu@ftu.edu.vn

Khánh, Dr. Phạm Tiết

Rector Tra Vinh University ptkhanhtv2000@gmail.com

Khôi, Dr. Bùi Việt

Deputy Director, Center for training of Excellent Students Responsible for Advanced Program Hanoi University of Technology bvkhoi@mail.hut.edu.vn

Khôi, Võ Đắc

Information Resources Center Director U.S. Consulate General HCMC vodk@state.gov

Khuat, Hoan Khai

Assistant Director

American Education Group

hoansh@comcast.net

Khứ, Dr. Nguyễn Phi

Head

University of Information Technology

Vietnam National University, HCMC

Khương, Dr. Nguyễn Hữu

Vice Rector

HCMC University of Transportation

nhkhuong@hcm.vnn.vn

Kim, Dr. Nguyễn Quang

Rector

Water Resources University

kimng@wru.edu.vn

Kivette, Rad

SE Asia Director, Global Community Service Foundation

Elite International Training Center

rad.kivette@gmail.com

Kwilinski, Kathie

Executive Director, International Programs

South Seattle Community College

kkwilins@sccd.ctc.edu

Kwilinski, Paul

Director of Vietnam Operations

English Languages Services

pkwilinski@els.edu

Ladinsky, Dr. Judy

School of Medicine and Public Health

University of Wisconsin

illadins@facstaff.wisc.edu

Lai, Trần Đức

Vice Minister

Ministry of Information and Communication

Lâm, Dr. Nguyễn Thị Quỳnh

Special Assistant to the President

International School in HCMC

duclam@hcm.vnn.vn,lam quynh@yahoo.com

Lâm, Quỳnh Anh

Attorney-at-Law Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer quynhanh.lam@freshfields.com

Lam, Van

Director, VSource International Corporation register@vsource-ic.com

Lan, Lê Phong

Information Resources Center Assistant U.S. Consulate General HCMC lelp@state.gov

Lan, Nguyễn My

President
General Electric, Vietnam
mylan.nguyen@ge.com

Lan, Nguyễn Ngọc

Senior Advisor
Mekong Capital
lan@mekongcapital.com

Lan, Lê Mai

Chief, Executive Officer
Bank Training and Consultancy Company
mailanle@btc.com.vn

Lan, Nguyễn Thị Minh

Department of English Vietnam National University, HCMC bantindhqg@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Latz, Dr. Gil

Vice Provost, International Affairs Portland State University <u>latzg@pdx.edu</u>

Le, Anh Tu Packard

Senior Economist Moody's Economy <u>Tu.packard@gmail.com</u>

Le, Dr. Han Q

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering University of Houston hqle@uh.edu

Le, Hung Q.

General Manager

Vietnam Design Engineering, Embedded Computing & Power Emerson Network Power

hung.q.le@emerson.com

Le, Khanh

Associate Director, The Vietnam Center Texas Tech University khanh.le@ttu.edu

Le, John Van H.

President and CEO United States-Vietnam Foundation jhlevan@yahoo.com

Le, Peter

Managing Director THP International, LLC peter.ppl.le@gmail.com

Le, Thomas

Senior Manager, Business Development, Vietnam & Indochina Oracle Corporation Thomas.le@oracle.com

Lee, Dr. Benjamin

Senior Vice President for International Affairs New School leeb@newschool.edu

Lestz Dr. Michael E.

Director, O'Neill Asia Cum Laude Endowment Associate Professor, History Trinity College michael.lestz@trincoll.edu

Liên, Đinh Thị Ngọc

Director, Center for International Cooperation Banking University, HCMC <u>lien.dinh@bu.edu.vn</u>

Lim, Roland

Country Sales Manager Rockwell Automation rlim@ra.rockwell.com Linh, Phạm Thị Khánh Cultural Affairs Assistant U.S. Consulate General HCMC <u>phamltk@state.gov</u>

Littin, Noah

Investment Director Blackhorse Asset Management noah@blackhorse.com.sg

Little, Ian Patrick

Director, International Student Recruitment Virginia Commonwealth University iplittle@vcu.edu

Long, Dr. Bành Tiến
Standing Vice Minister
Ministry of Education and Training
btlong@moet.gov.vn

Long, Dr. Lê Đức

Senior Officer, International Cooperation Department Ministry of Education and Training ldlong1952@yahoo.com

Long, Nguyễn

Country Coordinator Vietnam Foundation (VNF) longnguyen@vnfoundation.org

Long, Triệu Minh

Officer, International Relations Department Ministry of Information and Communication tmlong@mic.gov.vn

Long, Dr. Trương Thành

Vice-Dean HCMC University of Agriculture and Forestry truongthanhlong@hcmuaf.edu.vn

Luận, Nguyễn Hữu Cultural Affairs Assistant U.S. Consulate General HCMC nguyenlh@state.gov

Lực, Ngô Tấn Rector, Tien Giang University ngotanluc@tgu.edu.vn

Ludders, Jennifer

Consular Officer

U.S. Consulate General HCMC

<u>luddersjl@state.gov</u>

Lương, Dr. Bùi

Rector

Da Lat College of Education

Luu, Dr. Tran Kiem

Executive Vice President, APU International School American Pacific University maisth@apu.edu.vn

Ly, Phạm Thị

Centre for International Education Exchange and Research, HCMC University of Education <u>Lypham6386@yahoo.com</u>

Mai, Dr. Lê Thị Thanh

Deputy Director, Department of Post-Graduate Vietnam National University, HCMC mai@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Mai, Dr. Nguyễn Quỳnh

International University

Vietnam National University, HCMC

Marshak, William L.

Principal Commercial Officer U.S. Consulate General HCMC markshakwl@state.gov

Marsnik, Dr. Paul

Associate professor, Management and Entrepreneurship, College of St. Benedict St. John's University pmarsnik@csbsju.edu

Maxner, Dr. Steve

Director of the Vietnam Center Texas Tech University steve.maxner@ttu.edu

McArthur, Dr. Rochelle A.

Managing Director, Pacific Asian Management Institute University of Hawaii, Manoa rmcarthu@hawaii.edu

Menon, Sarath

Associate Director, South East Asia Office Commonthwealth of Pennsylvania pastate@signet.com.sg

Michalak, Michael W.

Ambassador

U.S. Embassy Hanoi

Minh, Dr. Lê Quang

Vice President

Vietnam National University, HCMC

lqminh@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Mitchell, Dr. Jonathan

Senior Education Scientist

RTI International

jemitchell@rti.org

Morales, Tomas D.

President Prof.

College of Staten Island

City University of New York

morales@mail.csi.cuny.edu

Mudd, Michael

Director, Public Policy Asia Pacific

Comptia

mmudd@comptia.org

Muhmood, Khalid

Apollo Education & Training

khalidmuhmood@apolloedutrain.com

Mười, Dr. Nguyễn Văn

Chair, Department of English

International University, Vietnam National University, HCMC

nvmuoi@hcmiu.edu.vn

Murphy, James

Financial Course Coordinator

RMIT International University

james.murphy@rmit.edu.vn

Nam, Nguyễn

Analyst

America Indochina Management (AIM) Ltd.

Nam.nguyen@aimidp.com

Nam, Dr. Nguyễn Thanh Head, Training Office University of Technology, Vietnam National University, HCMC nam@aao.hcmut.edu.vn

Nam, Phạm Văn Hai Duong College of Tourism phamhoangnam76@yahoo.com

Nay, Donald
Counselor for Commercial Service
U.S. Embassy Hanoi
donald.nay@mail.doc.gov

Nelson, Dr. C. Jerry
Professor of Plant Science
University of Missouri
nelsoncj@missouri.edu

Newfield, Dr. Neal Associate Professor, Division of Social Work West Virginia University nnewfiel@wvu.edu

Newton, Diep General Director Kaplan Brightstar Vietnam diep.newton@yahoo.com diep.newton@brightstar.edu.vn

Ng, Roland Executive Director Kaplan Singapore

Nga, Dr. Nguyễn Phương Director, Center for Education Quality Assurance and Research Development Vietnam National University Hanoi nganp@vnu.edu.vn

Ngân, Phan Lê Hải Lecturer Binh Dinh College of Education

Nghĩa, Đinh Đại Information Assistant U.S. Consulate General HCMC <u>dinhnd@state.gov</u>

Nghĩa, Dr. Trần Văn

Deputy Director General
Testing and Education Quality Accreditation Department,
Ministry of Education and Training
tvnghia@moet.edu.vn

Nghĩa, Vũ Trọng

Head of Communication, Centre for International Cooperation Banking University HCMC nghia.vu@bu.edu.vn

Ngo, Kim

Program Coordinator California State University, Fullerton kimmarketer@yahoo.com

Ngọc, Chu Hoài

Scholarship Program Officer Institute of International Education

Ngoc, Quách T. Mỹ

Associate Director for Educational Advising & Outreach Institute of International Education

Ngọc, Trần Cao Bội

Ngọc, Trần Hoài

IT Specialist, Executive MBA in Vietnam University of Hawaii hoaingoc@hawaii.edu

Ngữ, Dr. Nguyễn Văn

Director General, Financial and Planning Department Ministry of Education and Training nvngu@moet.edu.vn

Nguyen, Charles

Dean and Professor, School of Engineering Catholic University of America nguyen@cua.edu

Nguyen, Derrick

Advisor

California State University, Fullerton attorneyderricknguyen@yahoo.com

Nguyen, Dominic Thuan

Southeast Asia Studies, International Economics, The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University dominic.thuan.nguyen@gmail.com

Nguyen, Dr. Duc Tien

Vice Chair, Doctoral Review Committee Northwestern Polytechnic University dnguyen@mail.npu.edu

Nguyen, Dr. Henry

Managing General Partner IDG Ventures Vietnam hoang nguyen@idgvv.com.vn

Nguyen, Huy

Senior Lecturer
Darwin Management Consultants, LLP
huy@darwinbiz.com

Nguyen, Ta Hung

President/CFO Micro-analog, Inc hugnnguyen@micro-analog.com

Nguyen, Dr. Tam

Consultant
California State University, Fullerton
tamnguyenmba@gmail.com

Nguyễn, Dr. Trần Bình Thy CEO, APU International School

American Pacific University maisth@apu.edu.vn

Nguyễn, Trần N. Hạnh

Business Development Officer Institute of International Education

Nguyen, Uyen

Dean, Director of International Programs in Asia Catholic University of America nguyenu@cua.edu

Nguyen, Van Khanh

CP/CFO

Micro-Analog, Inc

kvnguyen@micro-analog.com

Nhị, Dr. Bùi Mạnh

Director General, Personnel Department Ministry of Education and Training bmnhi@moet.edu.vn

Nhien, Huynh V.

Director

QB i.A.C Co., Ltd

info@qbcorps.com

Ninh, Tôn Nữ Thị

Director

Tri Viet University Project

ninh.tnt@trivietuniversity.edu.vn

Norland, Patricia "Kit"

Public Affairs Officer

U.S. Consulate General HCMC

norlandkp@state.gov

Norman, Dr. Harry

Dean

California State University, Fullerton

hnorman@fullerton.edu

Oanh, Nguyễn Thị

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Social Work

HCMC Open University

ntoptcd@gmail.com

Oanh, Trinh Mai

Associate Director for Administration & Finance

Institute of International Education

Omdahl, Brent E.

Commercial Attache

U.S. Embassy Hanoi

Brent.omdahl@mail.doc.gov

Oyler, Dr. Patricia G.

Associate Dean, Graduate School of Library and Information Science Simmons College

oyler@simmons.edu

Parham, Charles A.

Director, Corporate Training Division SEATAG Offshore Charles@seatagoffshore.com

Passaro, Joanne

Provost Carroll University jpassaro@carrollu.edu

Persson, Dr. Carol

Vice President Westfield State College cpersson@wsc.ma.edu

Petit, Park

Chairman, Robinson College of Business George State University

Phạm, Kiên

Chairman Vietnam Foundation (VNF) kienpham@vnfoundation.org

Pham, Khoa

Co-Founder Viet Abroader Organization khoa.a.pham@gmail.com

Phạm, Văn Thuyết

President Institute of Economics and Institutional Development pthuyet@yahoo.com

Phong, Dr. Hồ Thanh

Rector, International University Vietnam National University, HCMC htphong@hcmiu.edu.vn

Phong, Dr. Nguyễn Đông

Vice Rector HCMC University of Economics phongnd@ueh.edu.vn

Phố, Dr. Phạm

Rector

Sai Gon College of Economics and Technology

Phú, Nguyễn Thanh Vice Rector Binh Phuoc College of Education

Phúc, Dr. Đỗ

Dean, University of Information Technology Vietnam National University, HCMC

Phước, Trần Vĩnh

Vice Rector, University of Information Technology Vietnam National University, HCMC phuoc.gis@uit.edu.vn

Phước, Dr. Trần Văn

Rector

Hue University of Foreign Languages tvphuoc@dng.vnn.vn

Phương, Dr. Hồ Thanh Mỹ

Dean of Educational Management Division Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Training Center - Vietnam <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/j.com/htmp4.0007/j.com/h

Phương, Dr. Lê Nhân

Country Manager & Director, Population Health Programme Atlantic Philanthropies p.le@atlanticphilanthropies.org

Phương, Nguyễn Thị Mai Vice Director of ITP Hanoi University of Technology maintp-mcx@mail.hut.edu.vn

Phượng, Bùi Trân
President
Hoa Sen University
btphuong@hoasen.edu.vn

Phượng, Huỳnh Mỹ Deputy Head, International Relations Tra Vinh University tvccdmy74@yahoo.com

Phượng, Lê Bích Vice Rector Binh Duong College of Tourism and Economics ktktbd@gmail.com Phượng, Dr. Nguyễn Thị Thanh Country Director Vietnam Education Foundation phuongnguyen@vef.gov

Plack, David

Special Assistant, Academic Programs Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs U.S. Department of State plackdp@state.gov

Quân, Lê

Hanoi University of Architecture

Quang, Nguyễn Minh Senior Officer, International relations HCMC Electric Power College Nguyenminhquang.hcm@gmail.com

Quế, Nguyễn Hoàng Dean, Department of Foreign Languages Marketing University nh.que@vnmu.edu.vn

Quinn-Judge, Dr. Sophie Temple University Philadelphia, PA sophie.quinnjudge@gmail.com

Qùy, Dr. Mai Hồng Rector, University of Law Vietnam National University, HCMC mhquy@hcmulaw.edu.vn

Quỳnh, Ngô Đình Cultural Affairs Specialist U.S. Embassy Hanoi ngodq@state.gov

Quỳnh, Phan Trúc Programme Associate for Education Atlantic Philanthropies q.phan@atlanticphilanthropies.org

Riedinger, Dr. Jeffrey
Dean, International Studies & Program
Michigan State University
ispdean@msu.edu

Robentson, Mark Khoi Viet College

Roberts, Dr. Laurence Winston
Dean of International Education
Utica College
<u>lroberts@utica.edu</u>

Roessler, Patricia

Director, Education Initiatives VinaCapital Foundation patricia.roessler@vinacapitalfoundation.org

Salis, Rachel De Sales and Marketing Manager Kaplan, Inc desalisr@yahoo.com

Salvidio, Nancy Associate Dean Westfield State College nsalvidio@wsc.ma.edu

Sáu, Nguyễn Văn Chancellor, Saigon Institute of Technology nguyen vs@saigontech.edu.vn

Scheid, Dr. Mark
President
Tan Tao University Project
mss@rice.edu

Schmitt, Landon
Vice President
AIM, Ltd.
landon.schmitt@investidp.com

Sen, Võ Văn

Rector, University of Social Science and Humanities Vietnam National University, HCMC senvy@hcmussh.edu.vn

Sherwood, Richard
Managing Director
American Education Group
richs66@comcast.net

Shih, Stone

International Marketing Director Phu My Hung Corporation stone@pmh.com.vn

Smith, Dr. David R.

Academic Advisor and Adjunct Assistant Professor of History University of Michigan davidsm@umich.edu

Soldier, Leona Little

Professor Texas Tech University namtravel@um.att.com

Soliz, Dr. Rudy

Department Chair, Business Administration Houston Community College rudy.soliz@hccs.edu

Son, Phan Hoàng

Director National Foundation for Science and Technology Development phson@most.gov.vn

Stephens, Andrew

Project Director
STAR Vietnam
Andrew_stephens@dai.com

Tài, Dr. Trinh Đức

Vice Rector
Da Lat College of Education
trinhductai@yahoo.com

Tân, Cao Đăng

Vice Director, Computer Science Center University of Natural Science Vietnam National University, HCMC tan@hcmuns.edu.vn

Tân, Phạm Ngọc

Business Solutions Director Entrepreneur Co. Ltd. hrtraining@hcm.vnn.vn Taylor, Drew
Director
English Languages Services
dtaylor@els.edu

Taylor, George

VP, WW Strategic Process Engineering Embedded Computing & Power Emerson Network Power George.taylor@emerson.com

Thanh, Dr. Dương Văn

Academic Director, Senior Lecturer World Learning/ Vietnam and SIT-Study Abroad thanh.duong@worldlearning.org

Thanh, Đồng Tố Vice Rector Hai Phong Community College dongtothanh@haiphong.gov.vn

Thanh, Mai Thi Senior Operations Officer World Bank Vietnam mthanh1@worldbank.org

Thanh, Vũ Đình

Rector, University of Technology Vietnam National University, HCMC vdthanh@hcmut.edu.vn

Thanh, Dr. Trương Bá Rector, Da Nang University College of Economics and Business Administration

Thành, Phan Ngọc

Director of Marketing & Recruitment, Executive MBA in Vietnam University of Hawaii thanhpn@hawaii.edu

Thắng, Trần

President, Institute for Vietnamese Culture & Education nhipsong@ivec.org

Thảo, Dr. Trần Xuân
Fulbright Program Director
U.S. Embassy Hanoi
<u>trantx@state.gov</u>

Thế, Dr. Phan Quang

Associate Professor, Vice Rector Thai Nguyen University of Technology <u>phanqthe@tnut.edu.vn</u>

Theisen, Karl B.

Associate Director, Global Management Arizone State University Karl.theisen@asu.edu

Thịnh, Dr. Đỗ Huy

Director, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Training Center - Vietnam <a href="https://doi.org/dtbi.ncm/dtbi.nc

Thịnh, Dr. Nguyễn Viết

Rector Hanoi National University of Education thinhhnpu@hn.vnn.vn

Thịnh, Võ Xuân

Deputy Chief, International Relations Saigon People-Established University of Technology vxthinh2702@gmail.com

Thông, Dr. Huỳnh Văn

Lecturer, University of Social Sciences & Humanity Vietnam National University HCMC huynhvanthong@yahoo.com

Thu, Dr. Nguyễn Thị Kiều

Dean, Department of English, Linguistics and Literature University of Social Siences & Humanity, Vietnam National University HCMC

Thuân, Lê Minh

Marketing & Outreach Officer Institute of International Education

Thương, Lê Văn

Vice Rector University of Architecture, HCMC <u>levanthuong@hcmuarc.edu.vn</u>

Thuỷ, Dr. Đông Thị Bích

Director, Faculty of Information Technology and Computer Science Center, University of Natural Sciences, Vietnam National University HCMC thuy@hcmuns.edu.vn

Tiên, Nguyễn Phúc Diễm Administration Assistant Public Affairs Section U.S. Consulate General HCMC nguyentpd@state.gov

Tiến, Dr. Hồ Viết Chief, International Relations HCMC University of Economics hvtien@ueh.edu.vn

Tiến, Phúc Director Centrepoint Media Ltd. ceo@vietnamhopdiem.edu.vn

Tiếng, Đinh Văn Vice Director National Academy of Public Administration

Tobin, Dr. Kimberly Dean Westfield State College ktobin@wsc.ma.edu

Tới, Dr. Võ Văn Executive Director Vietnam Education Foundation toivo@vef.gov

Tran, Andrew
Chancelor's Office
California State University System
atran@calstate.edu

Tran, Ailien
Fulbrighter
Ailien tran@yahoo.com

Tran, Dr. Hai
Director/Professor
U.S. GAO
<u>tranh@gao.gov</u>

Tran, Dr. Hien "Van"
Professor, School of Business
University of Houston-Clear Lake
tran@uhcl.edu

Tran, Jocelyn

Associate Vice President Limited Brands / Mast Industries jtran@mast.com

Tran, Quoc

Adjunct Professor Claremont Graduate University, California tran_quoc@alhambra.k12.ca.us

Trang, Nguyễn Thu

American Companies
Intel Products Vietnam
thu.trang.nguyen@intel.com

Trang, Nguyễn Thu

Vice Director

Tri Viet Education Research Centre thu.nt@trivietuniversity.edu.vn

Trang, Trương Nam

Senior Expert

Phan Thi Group JSC-Education

Trexler, Dr. Cary

Associate Professor School of Education and College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences University of California, Davis cjtrexler@ucdavis.edu

Trí, Huỳnh Minh

Head, Training Office Department of Education and Training, HCMC hmtri52@yahoo.com

Trinh, Dr. Nguyễn Thị Minh

Deputy Director, Department of Post-Graduate Vietnam National University, HCMC ntmtrinh@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Trung, Đỗ Quốc

Rector

Kien Giang College of Education dqtkgcc@hcm.vnn.vn; doquoctrung@gmail.com

Tú, Phạm Tuấn

Senior Banking Consultant, Viet Phu Payment Support Corporation Tu.pham@mobivi.com

Tuấn, Dr. Bùi Anh

Vice Rector

Hanoi National University of Economics

buianhtuan@neu.edu.vn

Tuấn, Dr. Bàng Anh

University of Social Sciences & Humanities Vietnam National University, HCMC tuanba@hcmussh.edu.vn

Tuấn, Đỗ Đức

Vice Rector

University of Transportation and Communication, Hanoi

Doductuan30450@yahoo.com

Tuấn, Dr. Nguyễn Anh

President

Can Tho University

tuants@ctu.edu.vn

Tuấn, Phan Đình

Vice Rector, University of Technology Vietnam National University, HCMC

pdtuan@hcmut.edu.vn

Tùng, Bùi Huy

Senior Officer, Training Office

National Academy of Public Administration

Tùng, Hồ Thanh

General Director

Vietnam & Indochina Region

Oracle Corporation

Tung.ho@oracle.com

Tùng, Dr. Lê Minh

Rector, An Giang University

lmtung@agu.edu.vn

Tùng, Dr. Võ Thanh

Head, Training Division

Dong Thap University

phongdaotao.spd@moet.edu.vn

Tước, Đào Huy

Center for International Education

Vietnam National University, HCMC

Tường, Nguyễn Khánh Vice Rector

College of Transportation No.3

Tuyến, Dr. Nguyễn Văn

Vice Rector

Hanoi National University of Education No.2 nguyenvtkh@yahoo.com

iiguyenvikii(u,yunoo.com

Uyên, Hồ

Corporate Affairs Manager Intel Products Vietnam uyen.ho@intel.com

Uyên, Võ Thị Cát

Technology Officer

Institute of International Education

Vance, Donald

Chairman

Viet My – Ha Long Joint Venture

Vang, Dr. Nguyễn Xuân

Director General, Vietnam International Education Development Ministry of Education and Training vang@hanu.vn

Vaughn, Dr. John

Vice President

Association of American Universities

john vaughn@aau.edu

Vân, Dr. Hà Hồng

Rector

Hau Giang Community College

Hahongvan cchg@yahoo.com.vn

Vân, Võ Bùi Cấm

RMIT International University Vietnam

van.vo@rmit.edu.vn

Văn, Dr. Cao

Vice Rector

Hung Vuong University, Phu Tho Province

Vibhakar, Ashvin P.

Managing Director, AP Operations
CFA Institute

ashvin.vibhakar@cfainstitute.org

Viên, Dr. Trần Đức Rector Hanoi University of Agriculture tdvien@hua.edu.vn

Việt, Đinh Thanh Da ẩ ang University

Vọng, ẩ guyễn Quốc Director, Center for International Development Hanoi University of Agriculture nqvong@hua.edu.vn

Wallace, Dr. Ray
Executive Director, International Programs
California State University, East Bay
ray.wallace@csueastbay.edu

Warren, James A.
Public Affairs Officer
U.S. Embassy Hanoi
warrenja@state.gov

Washington, Dale
President
Tan Hung Development
dale@hungdien.com

Weiser, Dr. Mark
Associate Dean, Spears School of Business
Oklahoma State University
weiser@okstate.edu

Wilson, Charles Leonard
Vice President
Stellar Management
chuck.emba@gmail.com

Wyatt, Dr. Andrew Benedict
Academic Director
School for International Training
Andrew.Wyatt@sit.edu

Xê, Dr. Đỗ Văn Vice Rector Can Tho University <u>dvxe@ctu.edu.vn</u>

Xuân, Dr. Võ Tòng Rector Emeritus An Giang University v.xuan@cgiar.org

Xue, Lisa

Director International Programs Asia California State University, Fullerton lxue@fullerton.edu

Yarr, Dr. Linda

Senior Research Scientist Director, Program for International Studies Asia, George Washington University lyarr@gwu.edu

Yến, Đặng Thị Hoàng Chairwoman Tan Tao University Project (ITA Group) ita@itagroup-vn.com

Zottoli, Brian

Resident Director Council on International Education Exchange bzottoli@ciee.org

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

AAE Systems, Inc.

Bryan Jones Marketing Manager bryanj@aaesys.com

AIG Life Vietnam

Dr. C. å guyen Canh Assistant Vice President songycanh05@gmail.com

American Indochina Management (AIM) Ltd.

Landon Schmitt
Vice President
landon.schmitt@investidp.com

å guyễn å am Analyst nam.nguyen@aimidp.com

American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)

Dr. Judith T. Irwin Director, International Programs & Services <u>jirwin@aacc.nche.edu</u>

American Education Group (AEG)

Richard Sherwood Managing Director Richs66@comcast.net

Hoan Khai Khuat Assistant Director hoansh@comcast.net

An Giang University

Dr. Lê Minh Tùng Rector Imtung@agu.edu.vn Dr. Võ Tòng Xuân Rector Emeritus v.xuan@cgiar.org

Apollo Education & Training

Khalid Muhmood khalidmuhmood@apolloedutrain.com

APU International School, American Pacific University

Dr. Tran Kiem Luu Executive Vice President <u>luutk@apu.edu.vn</u>

Dr. Trần Bình Thy ẩ guyễn CEO maisth@apu.edu.vn

Anh å win Vice Principal anhnwin@apu.edu.vn

Arizona State University

Karl B. Theisen Associate Director, Global Engagement karl.theisen@asu.edu

Association of American Universities (AAU)

Dr. John Vaughn Vice President john vaughn@aau.edu

ATV Vietnam

Lưu ẩ guyễn Thu Hà Director haluu@atv-vietnam.com

Atlantic Philanthropies

Phan Trúc Quỳnh Programme Associate for Education q.phan@atlanticphilanthropies.org

Ba Ria - Vung Tau College of Education

Trần Thanh Hoàng Deputy Chief, International Relations tranhoang23767@yahoo.com

Bank Training and Consultancy Company

Mai Lan Lê Chief Executive Officer mailanle@btc.com.vn

Banking University, HCMC

Vũ Trọng ẩ ghĩa Marketing Manager, Center for International Cooperation nghia.vu@bu.edu.vn

Binh Dinh College of Education

Phan Lê Hải ẩ gân Lecturer

Binh Duong College of Tourism and Economics

Lê Quang Minh President ktktbd@gmail.com

Lê Bích Phượng Vice Rector ktktbd@gmail.com

Binh Phuoc College of Education

å guyễn Thanh Phú Vice Rector

Binh Thuan Community College

Dr. å guyễn Phan Hưng Rector hung_nguyenphan@yahoo.com

Dr. Phạm Thị Minh Hạnh Chief, International Relations ptminhhanh@gmail.com

Blackhorse Asset Management

å oah Littin Investment Director noah@blackhorse.com.sg

California State University System

Dr. Andrew Tran Chancellor's Office atran@calstate.edu

California State University – East Bay

Dr. Ray Wallace Executive Director, International Programs ray.wallace@csueastbay.edu

California State University - Fullerton

Dr. Harry å orman Dean hnorman@fullerton.edu

Dr. Dennis F. Berg Department of Sociology <u>dberg@fullerton.edu</u>

Lisa Xue Director, International Programs Asia lxue@fullerton.edu

Kim å go Program Coordinator kimmarketer@yahoo.com

Derrick å guyen Advisor attorneyderricknguyen@yahoo.com

Dr. Tam å guyen Consultant tamnguyenmba@gmail.com

Can Tho University

Dr. å guyễn Anh Tuấn President tuants@ctu.edu.vn

Đỗ Văn Xê Vice Rector

Carroll University

Joanne Passaro Provost jpassaro@carrollu.edu

Katherine Hammett Director, International Education khammett@carrollu.edu

Catholic University of America

Dr. Uyen å guyen Dean, Director of International Programs in Asia nguyenu@cua.edu

Dr. Charles å guyen Dean and Professor, School of Engineering nguyen@cua.edu

Center for Educational Exchange Vietnam–American Council of Learned Societies

Minh Kauffman Director mkauffman@ceevn.org

Central Committee for Information and Education Communist Party of Vietnam

å guyễn Hữu Bạch Senior Expert

Centrepoint Media Ltd.

Phúc Tiến Director ceo@vietnamhopdiem.edu.vn

Cetana PSB Intellis International College

Bùi Minh Diễm Châu Deputy General Director & Principal diemchau@cetanapsb.edu.vn

å guyễn Quang Huy Director, Sales & Marketing quanghuy@cetanapsb.edu.vn

CFA Institute

Ashvin P. Vibhakar Managing Director, AP Operations ashvin.vibhakar@cfainstitute.org

Rahul Keshap Director AP Strategy and Operations rahul.keshap@cfainstitute.org

Claremont Graduate University, California

Dr. Quoc Tran Adjunct Professor tran quoc@alhambra.k12.ca.us

College of Staten Island, City University of New York

Dr. Tomas D. Morales President morales@mail.csi.cuny.edu

Ann Helm Executive Director, Center for International Service helm@mail.csi.cuny.edu

College of Transportation No.3

Mr. å guyễn Khánh Tường Vice Rector

Ms. å guyễn å gân Giang Head, International Relations giangnguyen ct3@yahoo.com

Commonthwealth of Pennsylvania

Menon, Sarath Associate Director, South East Asia Office pastate@signet.com.sg

å guyễn Giang Hanoi Office pavietnam@pa-asean.com

Comptia

Michael Mudd Director, Public Policy, Asia Pacific mmudd@comptia.org

Consortium of Global Education

Karen Bennett karenb@mailcentral.biz

Council on International Education Exchange

Brian Zottoli Resident Director bzottoli@ciee.org

CT&D Group

Alpha Chen International Marketing Director elphachen@yahoo.com

Da Lat College of Education

Dr. Bùi Lương Rector

Dr. Trịnh Đức Tài Vice Rector trinhductai@yahoo.com

Da Nang College of Economics and Planning

Dr. Vũ Đăng Hải Rector tcdktkh@hcm.vnn.vn

Da Nang University

Dr. Bùi Văn Ga President buivanga@dng.vnn.vn

Dr. Dương Mộng Hà Director, International Relations dmha@ud.edu.vn

Dr. Đinh Thanh Việt

Da Nang University, College of Economics and Business Administration

Dr. Trương Bá Thanh Rector

Da Nang University, College of Foreign Languages

Dr. Trần Quang Hải Vice Rector tghai@ud.edu.vn

Darwin Management Consultants, LLP

Huy å guyen Senior Lecturer huy@darwinbiz.com

Department of Education and Training, HCMC

Huỳnh Minh Trí Head, Training Office hmtri52@yahoo.com

Dong Thap University

Dr. Võ Thanh Tùng Head, Training Division phongdaotao.spd@moet.edu.vn

East-West Center

Dr. Terance W. Bigalke Director, Education Division bigalket@eastwestcenter.org

Elite International Training Center

Rad Kivette SE Asia Director Global Community Service Foundation rad.kivette@gmail.com

English Languages Services (ELS)

Mark Harris President and CEO mark.harris@berlitz.com

Drew Taylor Director dtaylor@els.edu

Paul Kwilinski Director of Vietnam Operations pkwilinski@els.edu

Robert Johnstone

Emerson Network Power

George Taylor VP, WW Strategic Process Engineering Embedded Computing & Power george.taylor@emerson.com

Hung Q. Le General Manager, Vietnam Design Engineering Embedded Computing & Power hung.q.le@emerson.com

Entrepreneur Co. Ltd.

Phạm ẩ gọc Tân Business Solutions Director hrtraining@hcm.vnn.vn

Debray Alain

Florida Gulf Coast University

Dr. Peter Bergerson Professor of Public Affairs pbergers@fgcu.edu

Foreign Trade University

Dr. å guyễn Quang Hiệp Vice Dean hiebiz@yahoo.com

å guyễn Mai Khanh Lecturer Faculty of Economics and International Relations ktkdqt.ftu@ftu.edu.vn

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

Quỳnh Anh Lâm Attorney-at-Law quynhanh.lam@freshfields.com

General Electric

Stuart Dean President, General Electric ASEAå stuart.dean@ge.com

å guyễn My Lan President, General Electric Vietnam mylan.nguyen@ge.com

George State University

Dr. Park Petit Chairman, Robinson College of Business

George Washington University

Dr. Linda Yarr Senior Research Scientist Director, Program for International Studies in Asia lyarr@gwu.edu

Hai Duong College of Tourism

Phạm Văn ẩ am Head, Tourism Department phamhoangnam76@yahoo.com

Hai Phong Community College

Đỗ Văn Hạ Rector <u>dvha hpcc@yhaoo.com</u>

Mr. Đồng Tố Thanh Vice Rector dongtothanh@haiphong.gov.vn

Hanoi Architectural University

Dr. Chế Đình Hoàng Vice Rector pth@hn.vnn.vn

Lê Quân

Hanoi National Economics University

Dr. Bùi Anh Tuấn Vice Rector buianhtuan@neu.edu.vn

Dr. Đặng ẩ gọc Đức Chief, International Finance Department Banking and Finance Faculty dangocduc@hn.vnn.vn

Dr. Tạ Mạnh Thắng Expert, Training Management Division Center for Educational Research and Development ta.thang@neu.edu.vn

Hanoi National University of Education

Dr. å guyễn Viết Thịnh Rector thinhhnpu@hn.vnn.vn

Hanoi National University of Education No.2

Dr. å guyễn Văn Tuyến Vice Rector nguyenvtkh@yahoo.com

Hanoi University of Agriculture

Dr. Trần Đức Viên Rector tdvien@hua.edu.vn

Mr. å guyễn Quốc Vọng Director Center for International Development nqvong@hua.edu.vn

Hanoi University of Technology

Dr. Bùi Việt Khôi Deputy Director, Center for Training of Excellent Students Responsible for Advanced Programs bvkhoi@mail.hut.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Thị Mai Phương Vice Director of International Training Programs maintp-mcx@mail.hut.edu.vn

Hau Giang Community College

Dr. Hà Hồng Vân Rector hahongvan cchg@yahoo.com

HCMC College of Education

Dr. å guyễn Minh Anh Head

HCMC Electric Power College

å guyễn Minh Quang Senior Officer, International Relations nguyenminhquang.hcm@gmail.com

HCMC Open University

å guyễn Thị Oanh Adjunct Assistant, Professor of Social Work ntoptcd@gmail.com

HCMC People-Established Univ. for Foreign Language & Information Technology

Võ Xuân Dan Rector Assistant voxuandan@yahho.com

HCMC University of Agriculture and Forestry

Dr. Trịnh Trường Giang Rector

Dr. å guyễn Lê Hưng Vice Rector <u>lehungn@gmail.com</u> <u>nlhung@hcmuaf.edu.vn</u>

Dr. Trương Thành Long Vice-Dean Faculty of Food and Science and Technology truongthanhlong@hcmuaf.edu.vn

HCMC University of Economics

Dr. å guyễn Đông Phong Vice Rector nhanlt@ueh.edu.vn

Dr. Hồ Viết Tiến Chief, International Relations hvtien@ueh.edu.vn

HCMC University of Education

Dr. Bùi Mạnh Hùng Vice Dean, Vietnamese Linguistics and Literature Department hungduy@hcm.fpt.vn

Phạm Thị Ly Director, Center for International Education Exchange and Research lypham6386@yahoo.com

HCMC University of Technical Education

Dr. Thái Bá Cần President cantb@hcmute.edu.vn Trần Thu Hà Head, International Relations thuha@hcmute.edu.vn

HCMC University of Transportation

Dr. å guyễn Hữu Khương Vice Rector nhkhuong@hcm.vnn.vn

Dr. å guyễn Quý Doanh International Relations ut-hem@hemutrans.edu.vn

Hoa Sen University

Dr. Bùi Trân Phượng President btphuong@hoasen.edu.vn

Hong Bang University

Dr. å guyễn Mạnh Hùng President

Hong Duc University, Thanh Hoa City

Dr. å guyễn Song Hoan Vice President songhoan 2000@yahoo.com

Houston Community College

Gigi Do
Director of International Initiatives
gigi.do@hccs.edu

Dr. Rudy Soliz, Department Chair - Business Administration rudy.soliz@hccs.edu

Hue College of Education

Dr. ẩ gô Đắc Chứng Vice Rector cdsp.hue@vnn.vn

Hue University of Education

Ms. Trần Thị Tú Anh Deputy Head International Relations chec92@yahoo.com

Hue University of Foreign Languages

Dr. Trần Văn Phước Rector tvphuoc@dng.vnn.vn

Hung Vuong University, Phu Tho Province

Dr. Cao Văn Vice Rector

IBM

Ms. Krienkrai (KK) Bhuvanij Executive Governmental Program Thailand & Vietnam krienkr@th.ibm.com

IDG Ventures Vietnam

Dr. Henry å guyen Managing General Partner hoang nguyen@idgvv.com.vn

Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis

Dr. David L. Jones Director Indiana University Center on Southeast Asia dljones@iupui.edu

Dr. Patricia Ellen Biddinger Director International Recruitment and Retention Office of International Affairs pbiddin@iupui.edu

Institute for Vietnamese Culture and Education (IVCE)

Trần Thắng President nhipsong@ivce.org

Institute of Economics and Institutional Development

Phạm Văn Thuyết President and CEO pthuyet@yahoo.com

Institute of International Education

Dr. Allan E. Goodman President & CEO agoodman@iie.org

Institute of International Education, Vietnam

Dr. Mark Ashwill Director mashwill@iievn.org

Hoàng Minh Hiếu EducationUSA Advisor

Chu Hoài ẩ gọc Associate Director for Educational Advising & Outreach

Quách T. Mỹ ẩ gọc Associate Director for Educational Advising & Outreach

Trần ẩ . Hạnh ẩ guyên Business Development Officer

Trịnh Mai Oanh Associate Director for Administration & Finance

Lê Minh Thuận Marketing & Outreach Officer

Võ Thị Cát Uyên Technology Officer

Intel Products Vietnam

Rick Howarth General Manager rick.a.howarth@intel.com

Hồ Uyên Corporate Affairs Manager uyen.ho@intel.com Luong Giang giang.luong@intel.com

å guyễn Thu Trang Higher Education Program Manager trang.thu.nguyen@intel.com

International School, HCMC

Dr. å guyễn Thị Quỳnh Lam Special Assistant to the President duclam@hcm.vnn.vn; lam quynh@yahoo.com

Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Pamela Cranston Vice Provost for International Programs pcranston@jhu.edu

Dominic Thuan å guyen Southeast Asia Studies, International Economics dominic.thuan.nguyen@gmail.com dnguyen36@jhu.edu

Kaplan, Inc.

Mark Coggins President, Asia Pacific

Rachel De Salis Sales and Marketing Manager Kaplan BrightStar desalisr@yahoo.com

Roland å g Executive Director Kaplan, Singapore

Diep å ewton General Director Kaplan BrightStar – Vietnam diep.newton@brightstar.edu.vn

Khoi Viet College

Mark Robentson

Kien Giang Community College

Mr. Đỗ Quốc Trung President dqtkgcc@hcm.vnn.vn doquoctrung@gmail.com

Laureate Education Inc.

Andrew Enthoven @laureate-inc.com

LCMS World Mission

Ted Engelbrecht tengel@keptprivate.com

Limited Brands / Mast Industries

Ms. Jocelyn Tran Associate Vice President jtran@mast.com

Loyola University

Paul J. Brown Vietnam Program Manager Office of International Affairs paulbrown20@hotmail.com

Dr. Patrick M. Boyle Associate Provost pboyle@luc.edu

Joseph Dao Office for International Programs Representatives in Vietnam jfrendr@luc.edu

Manpower Vietnam

å icola Connolly Operations Manager nicola.connolly@manpower.com.vn thi ngoc.quyen@manpower.com.vn

Mekong Capital

å guyễn å gọc Lan Senior Advisor lan@mekongcapital.com

Michigan State University

Dr. Jeffrey Riedinger Dean International Studies & Program ispdean@msu.edu

Dr. John Hudzik Vice President Global Engagement & Strategic Projects hudzik@msu.edu

Micro - Analog, Inc.

å guyen Ta Hung President /CFO hungnguyen@micro-analog.com

å guyen Van Khanh VP/CFO kvnguyen@micro-analog.com

Millennium Global Solutions Group

Dr. Hoàng Hà Thanh Group Vice-President General Manager hoanghathanh@gmail.com

Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)

Dr. Bành Tiến Long Standing Vice Minister btlong@moet.edu.vn

Trần Bá Việt Dũng Director General, International Cooperation Development tbvdung@moet.edu.vn

Dr. Trần Thị Hà Director General, Higher Education Department ttha@moet.edu.vn Dr. å guyễn Văn å gữ Director General, Financial and Planning Department nvngu@moet.edu.vn

Dr. Bùi Mạnh ẩ hị Director General, Personnel Department bmnhi@moet.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Xuân Vang Director General, Vietnam International Education Development vang@hanu.vn

Dr. å guyễn å gọc Hùng Deputy Director General, International Cooperation Department nnhung@moet.gov.vn

Dr. å guyễn Thị Lê Hương Deputy Director General, Higher Education Department ntlhuong@moet.edu.vn

Dr. Trần Văn ẩ ghĩa Deputy Director General Testing and Education Quality Accreditation Department tvnghia@moet.edu.vn

å guyễn Trường Giang Division Chief, Public Expenditure Department

Trương Thanh Hải Chief, Statistic Division, Financial and Planning Department tthai@moet.gov.vn

Dr. å guyễn Văn Hựu Senior Officer, Higher Education Department

Dr. Lê Đức Long Senior Officer, International Cooperation Department ldlong1952@yahoo.com

Đỗ Việt Hà Officer, Human Resource Development HCMC Representative Office <u>dvha@moet.edu.vn</u>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Hà Văn An Senior Officer, Americas Department

Ministry of Health

Trần Thị Trung Chiến Former Minister

Ministry of Information and Communication

Trần Đức Lai Vice Minister

Quản Duy ẩ gân Hà Director General, International Relations Department qdha@mic.gov.vn

Triệu Minh Long Officer, International Relations Department tmlong@mic.gov.vn

Mohawk Valley Community College

Dr. Sandra Ann Engel Head, Humanities Director, International Education sengel@mvcc.edu

Moody's Economy

Le Anh Tu Packard Senior Economist tu.packard@gmail.com

MS Global Finance LLC

Mr. Lowell Gettman Chief Representative lowell.msgf@gmail.com

National Academy of Public Administration

Dr. Đinh Văn Tiếng Vice Director

Bùi Huy Tùng Senior Officer, Training Office

National Foundation for Science and Technology Development

Phan Hoàng Sơn Director phson@most.gov.vn

å guyễn Thuý Hà Specialist, å atural Sciences ntha20@most.gov.vn

New School

Dr. Benjamin Lee Senior Vice President for International Affairs <u>leeb@newschool.edu</u>

Northcentral University

Dr. Patrick T. Doan Dean pdoan@ncu.edu

Northwestern Polytechnic University

Dr. Đức Tiến ẩ guyễn Professor, Vice Chair Doctoral Review Committee dnguyen@mail.npu.edu

Oklahoma State University

Dr. Mark Weiser Associate Dean, Spears School of Business weiser@okstate.edu

Oracle Corporation

Andrew Crow Education Solutions Director – ASEAâ andrew.crow@oracle.com

Hồ Thanh Tùng General Director Vietnam and Indochina Region tung.ho@oracle.com

Thomas Le Senior Manager, Business Development Vietnam and Indochina Region thomas.le@oracle.com

Pacific Links Foundation

Trần Kim Anh Chair tkanh@pacificlinks.org

Diệp Vương Adjunct Assistant, Professor of Social Work dnyuong@pacificlinks.org

Phan Thi Group JSC - Education

Dr. Robert J. Butler Chairman bob.butler@phanthigroup.com

Phan Thị Thu Hiền General Director hien.phan@phanthigroup.com

Trương ẩ am Trang Senior Expert

Phu My Hung Corporation

Stone Shih International Marketing Director stone@pmh.com.vn

Võ Hoàng Hiên Specialist of International Marketing hoanghien@pmh.com.vn

Portland State University

Dr. Gil Latz Vice Provost for International Affairs <u>latzg@pdx.edu</u>

Pyramid Software Development

James Do VP Engineering james.do@psdus.com

QB i.A.C. Co., Ltd

Huỳnh V. ẩ hiên Director info@qbcorps.com

Qualcomm International

Vũ Thị Minh Hoàng Director hvu@qualcomm.com

RMIT International University Vietnam

Chris Giaras
Director of Business Development
chris.giaras@rmit.edu.vn

James Murphy Financial Course Coordinator james.murphy@rmit.edu.vn

Võ Bùi Cẩm Vân Vietnamese van.vo@rmit.edu.vn

Rockwell Automation

Bruce Quinn Vice President bmquinn@ra.rockwell.com

Rachel Ding Manager rhding@ra.rockwell.com

Roland Lim Country Sales Manager rlim@ra.rockwell.com

RTI International

Dr. Jonathan Mitchell Senior Education Scientist jemitchell@rti.org

Sai Gon College of Economics and Technology

Dr. Phạm Phố President saimete@hcm.vnn.vn

Saigon Institute of Technology

å guyễn Văn Sáu Chancellor nguyen vs@saigontech.edu.vn

Trần ẩ guyễn Hoài Chi Executive Director, International Initiatives chith@saigontech.edu.vn

Saigon People-Established University of Technology

Võ Xuân Thịnh Deputy Chief, International Relations vxthinh2702@gmail.com

School for International Training

Dr. Andrew Benedict Wyatt Academic Director Andrew.Wyatt@sit.edu

SEATAG Offshore

Charles A. Parham Director, Corporate Training Division Charles@seatagoffshore.com

Simmons College

Dr. Patricia G. Oyler Associate Dean, Graduate School of Library and Information Science oyler@simmons.edu

South Seattle Community College

Kathie Kwilinski Executive Director International Programs kkwilins@sccd.ctc.edu

Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)

Dr. Đỗ Huy Thịnh Director Regional Training Center in Viet å am dhthinh@vnseameo.org

Dr. Hồ Thanh Mỹ Phương Dean of Educational Management Division Regional Training Center in Viet ẩ am htmphuong@vnseameo.org

St. John's University and College of St. Benedict

Dr. Paul Marsnik Associate professor, Management and Entrepreneurship pmarsnik@csbsju.edu

St. Vincent College

Dr. Tina Phillips Johnson Director of Chinese Studies tina.johnson@stvincent.edu

STAR Viet Nam

Andrew Stephens Project Director andrew stephens@dai.com

Susan Adams sadamshcmc@gmail.com

Stellar Management

Charles Leonard Wilson Vice President chuck.emba@gmail.com

Robert T Connolly Vice President - AIU BobinVå @gmail.com

Augustine Hà Tôn Vinh President & CEO <u>AugVinh@aol.com</u> Hà Xuân Trung Chairman ha.trung.openled@gmail.com

Tan Hung Development

Dale Washington President dale@hungdien.com

Tan Tao University Project (ITA Group)

Đặng Thị Hoàng Yến Chairwoman ita@itagroup-vn.com

Dr. Mark Scheid President mss@rice.edu

Tay Nguyen University

Dr. å guyễn Tiến Đạt Vice Rector ntdattaynguyen@yahoo.com

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

Dr. Sophie Quinn-Judge sophie.quinnjudge@gmail.com

Texas Tech University

Dr. Steve Maxner
Director of the Vietnam Center
steve.maxner@ttu.edu

Dr. Khanh Le Associate Director of the Vietnam Center khanh.le@ttu.edu

Dr. Leona Little Soldier namtravel@um.att.com

Thai Nguyen University of Technology

Dr. Phan Quang Thé Associate Professor, Vice Rector

phanqthe@tnut.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Văn Du Associate Professor Head of International Relations and Research Office General Secretary of the Advanced Program vandu@tnut.edu.vn

THP International, LLC

Peter Le Managing Director peter.ppl.le@gmail.com

Tien Giang University

Dr. å gô Tấn Lực Rector ngotanluc@tgu.edu.vn

Tra Vinh University

Dr. Phạm Tiết Khánh Rector ptkhanhtv2000@gmail.com

Huỳnh Mỹ Phượng Deputy Head, International Relations tvccdmy74@yahoo.com

Tri Viet Education Research Centre, Tri Viet University Project

Tôn ẩ ữ Thị ẩ inh Director ninh.tnt@trivietuniversity.edu.vn

å guyễn Thu Trang Vice Director thu.nt@trivietuniversity.edu.vn

Trinity College

Dr. Michael E. Lestz Director O'â eill Asia Cum Laude Endowment michael.lestz@trincoll.edu

U.S. Consulate General, Ho Chi Minh City

Ken Fairfax Consul General fairfaxkj@state.gov

Angela Dickey Deputy Principal Officer dickeyar@state.gov

Chuck Bennett
Consular Section Chief
bennettce@state.gov

Jennifer Ludders Consular Officer luddersjl@state.gov

William L. Marshak Principal Commercial Officer markshakwl@state.gov

Patricia "Kit" å orland Public Affairs Officer norlandpd@state.gov

Sunshine Ison Deputy Public Affairs Officer <u>isonas@state.gov</u>

å guyễn Phúc Diễm Tiên Administrative Assistant, Public Affairs Section nguyentpd@state.gov

Lê Thị Thanh Hiền Information Specialist, Public Affairs Section <u>lehtt@state.gov</u>

Đinh Đại ẩ ghĩa Information Specialist, Public Affairs Section <u>dinhnd@state.gov</u>

å guyễn Hữu Luận Cultural Affairs Assistant, Public Affairs Section nguyenlh@state.gov

Phạm Thị Khánh Linh Cultural Affairs Assistant, Public Affairs Section

phamltk@state.gov

Võ Đắc Khôi Information Resources Center Director, Public Affairs Section vokd@state.gov

å guyễn Mạnh Thuần Đức Information Resources Center Assistant, Public Affairs Section nguyenmtd@state.gov

Lê Phong Lan Information Resources Center Assistant, Public Affairs Section lelp@state.gov

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs

Bill Bate Branch Chief, Fulbright Program East Asia and Pacific batewa@state.gov

David Plack Special Assistant, Academic Programs plackdp@state.gov

Toni Hull English Language Fellow toni hull2002@yahoo.com

U.S. Embassy, Bangkok

Dr. Seema Agarwal-Harding Regional Education Advisor U.S. AID, Asia sagarwal-harding@usaid.gov

U.S. Embassy Hanoi

Michael W. Michalak Ambassador

Donald å ay Counselor for Commercial Service donald.nay@mail.doc.gov

Brent E. Omdahl Commercial Attaché brent.omdahl@mail.doc.gov Howard Handler Country Director, U.S. AID hhandler@usaid.gov

James A. Warren Public Affairs Officer warrenja@state.gov

Bernice Clark Education Conference Liaison clark b h@yahoo.com

å guyễn Thanh Hiền Office Assistant, Public Affairs Section nguyentx@state.gov

å gô Đình Quỳnh Cultural Affairs Specialist, Public Affairs Section ngodq@state.gov

Dr. Trần Xuân Thảo Fulbright Program Director, Public Affairs Section <u>trantx@state.gov</u>

Đỗ Thu Hương Fulbright Program Assistant, Public Affairs Section dohx@state.gov

U.S. GAO

Dr. Hai Tran Director/Professor tranh@gao.gov

United States – Vietnam Foundation

Dr. John H. Le Van President and CEO jhlevan@yahoo.com

University of Architecture, HCMC

Dr. Lê Văn Thương Vice Rector <u>levanthuong@hcmuarc.edu.vn</u> Dr. Trịnh Duy Anh Head, Training Reform Board <u>duyanh54kts@yahoo.com</u>

University of Arizona

Dr. Rylan Higgins Director, CET Academic Programs rylan@email.arizona.edu

University of California – Davis

Dr. Cary Trexler Associate Professor School of Education and College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences cjtrexler@ucdavis.edu

University of Colorado, Boulder

Dr. Herbert Covert Professor of Anthropology <u>covert@colorado.edu</u>

University of Forestry

Dr. Phạm Bá Hanh Vice Rector hanhphamba@voctech-dn.edu.vn

University of Hawaii

Dr. Tung Bui Graduate Chair and, Director of PhD Program in Int'l Management Faculty Advisor, Executive MBA in Vietnam tungb@hawaii.edu

Dr. Rochelle A. McArthur Managing Director Pacific Asian Management Institute rmcarthu@hawaii.edu

Mr. Thiều Trung Hiếu Program coordinator Executive MBA program in HCMC thieu@hawaii.edu

Mr. Trần Hoài ẩ gọc Information Technology Specialist Executive MBA in Vietnam hoaingoc@hawaii.edu Mr. Phan å gọc Thành Director of Marketing & Recruitment Executive MBA in Vietnam thanhpn@hawaii.edu

University of Houston

Dr. Han Q Le Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering hqle@uh.edu

University of Houston, Clear Lake

Dr. William Theodore "Ted" Cummings Dean, School of Business <u>cummings@uhcl.edu</u>

Dr. Hien "Van" Tran Professor, School of Business tran@uhcl.edu

University of Maryland

Ms. Vicky Foxworth Director, Center for Leadership and Organizational Change foxworth@umd.edu

University of Missouri

Dr. Joe Hobbs Chairman Vietnam Initiatives Group hobbsj@missouri.edu

Dr. Lex A. Akers Associate Dean of Engineering akersl@missouri.edu

Dr. C. Jerry å elson Professor of Plant Science nelsoncj@missouri.edu

University of Montana

Dr. Royce Engstrom Provost royce.engstrom@umontana.edu Ms. Mary Engstrom Associate Director Instructional Design and Development

University of Pittsburgh

Dr. W. James Jacob Director, Institute for International Studies in Education wjacob@pitt.edu

Ms. Michele Heryford Managing Director, Asian Studies Center <u>ferrier@pitt.edu</u>

Dr. David M. Berman Associate Professor dmberman@pitt.edu

University of Southern California

Hanh D. Le-Griffin Research Faculty hdle@usc.edu

University of Transportation No.2

Mr. å guyễn Văn Hùng Vice Rector hoxuanba@gmail.com

University of Transportation and Communication, Hanoi

Dr. Đỗ Đức Tuấn Vice Rector doductuan30450@yahoo.com

University of Washington

Dr. Judith Henchy Head, Southeast Asia Section University of Washington Libraries judithh@u.washington.edu

University of Wisconsin, Madison

Dr. Ian Coxhead Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics coxhead@wisc.edu

University of Wisconsin, School of Medicine and Public Health

Dr. Judy Ladinsky jlladins@facstaff.wisc.edu

Utica College

Dr. Laurence Winston Roberts Dean of International Education lroberts@utica.edu

Van Hien University

Dr. å guyễn Mộng Hùng Rector nguyenmonghung@hcm.vnn.vn

Viet Abroader Organization

Khoa Pham Co-Founder khoa.a.pham@gmail.com

Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF)

Dr. Võ Văn Tới Executive Director toivo@vef.gov

Dr. å guyễn Thị Thanh Phượng Country Director phuongnguyen@vef.gov

Vietnam Foundation (VNF)

Kiên Phạm Chairman kienpham@vnfoundation.org

å guyễn Long Country Coordinator longnguyen@vnfoundation.org

Vietnam National University, Hanoi

Dr. å guyễn Phương å ga Director, Center for Education Quality Assurance and Research Development nganp@vnu.edu.vn

Vietnam National University Hanoi, University of Technology

Dr. å guyễn Hữu Đức Rector ducnh@vnu.edu.vn

Vietnam National University, HCMC

Dr. Phan Thanh Bình President ptbinh@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dr. Lê Quang Minh Vice President lqminh@vnu.hcm.edu.vn

Dr. Trần Thị Hồng Director, Department of International Relations hongtt@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dr. Lê Thị Thanh Mai Deputy Director, Department of Post-Graduate mai@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Thị Minh Trinh Deputy Director, Department of Post-Graduate ntmtrinh@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Tiến Dũng Head, Administration Division ntdung@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dr. Hoàng Dũng Director, Department of Sciences and Technology hdung@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Lê Văn Hinh Senior Officer, Department of International Relations <u>lvhinh@vnuhcm.edu.vn</u>

å guyễn Thị Minh Lan Senior Officer, Department of International Relations bantindhqg@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Trần Thịnh Đạt Marketing Manager Center for International Education Đào Huy Tước Center for International Education

Vietnam National University HCMC, International University

Dr. Hồ Thanh Phong Rector htphong@hcmiu.edu.vn

Dr. Trương Quang Được Vice Rector tqduoc@hcmiu.edu.vn duoctg@vnuhcm.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Quỳnh Mai Director, International Relations nqmai@hcmiu.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Văn Mười Chair of Department of English nvmuoi@hcmiu.edu.vn

Vietnam National University HCMC, University of Information Technology

Dr. Trần Vĩnh Phước Vice Rector phuoc.gis@uit.edu.vn

Dr. Đỗ Phúc Dean, Department of Information System

Dr. å guyễn Phi Khứ Director, International Relations

Vietnam National University HCMC, University of Law

Dr. Mai Hồng Qùy Rector mhquy@hcmulaw.edu.vn

Vietnam National University HCMC, University of Natural Science

Hoàng ẩ gọc Cường Director, International Relations <u>cuong@hcmuns.edu.vn</u> Dr. Đông Thị Bích Thuỷ Director, Faculty of Information Technology and Computer Science Center thuy@hcmuns.edu.vn

Dr. Cao Đăng Tân Vice Director Computer Science Center tan@hcmuns.edu.vn

Vietnam National University HCMC, University of Social Science and Humanities

Dr. Võ Văn Sen Rector senvv@hcmussh.edu.vn

Dr. Trương Thị Kim Chuyên Vice Rector chuyenttk@hcmussh.edu.vn

Dr. Bàng Anh Tuấn Director, International Relations tuanba@hcmussh.edu.vn

Trần Cao Bội ẩ gọc Deputy Director, International Relations hoangphuong_ussh@yahoo.com

Dr. å guyễn Thị Kiều Thu Dean, Department of English, Linguistics and Literature

Dr. Huỳnh Văn Thông Lecturer huynhvanthong@yahoo.com

Vietnam National University HCMC, University of Technology

Dr. Vũ Đình Thanh Rector vdthanh@hcmut.edu.vn

Dr. Phan Đình Tuấn Vice Rector pdtuan@hcmut.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Thanh å am Head, Training Office nam@aao.hcmut.edu.vn

Viet Phu Payment Support Corporation

Phạm Tuấn Tú Senior Banking Consultant tu.pham@mobivi.com

VinaCapital Foundation

Patricia Roessler Director, Education Initiatives patricia.roessler@vinacapitalfoundation.org

Vinh Long College of Finance and Economics

å guyễn Thị Giang Vice Rector ntgiangvcef@yahoo.com.vn

Vinh Long Community College

å guyễn Thị ả gọc Giàu ngocgiau360@yahoo.com

Virginia Commonwealth University

Ian Patrick Little Director, International Student Recruitment iplittle@vcu.edu

Voluntary Service Overseas - Vietnam

Catherine Briscoe
Consultant to West Virginia University, Social Work Partnership
Catherine.Briscoe@vsoint.org

Volunteers in Asia

Lillian Forsyth Vietnam Program Director vietnam@viaprograms.org

VSource International Corporation

Hau Lam CEO hau@tessi.com Lam Van Director register@vsource-ic.com

Water Resources University

Dr. å guyễn Quang Kim Rector kimnq@wru.edu.vn

Dr. å guyễn Thu Hiền Vice Dean, Water Resources Engineering Faculty hien@wru.edu.vn

West Virginia University

Dr. å eal å ewfield Associate Professor, Division of Social Work nnewfiel@wvu.edu

Westfield State College

Dr. Carol Persson Vice President epersson@wsc.ma.edu

Dr. Robert Hayes Vice President Academic Affairs rhayes@wsc.ma.edu

Dr. Kimberly Tobin Dean ktobin@wsc.ma.edu

Dr. å ancy Salvidio Associate Dean nsalvidio@wsc.ma.edu

World Bank Vietnam

Mai Thị Thanh Senior Operations Officer mthanh1@worldbank.org

World Learning / Vietnam and SIT-Study Abroad

Dr. Durong Văn Thanh Academic Director, Senior Lecturer thanh.duong@worldlearning.org

APPENDIX

THE FOLLOWING BREAKOUT SESSION ORGANIZERS PROVIDED SUMMARIES OF THEIR SESSIONS

Breakout Session 1A: The California State University System and its Vietnamese Partners

Moderator: Andrew Tran, Chancellor's Office, California State University System (CSU), Long Beach, California

Speakers:

- Dr. Nguyen Thi Le Huong, Deputy Director General, Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (MOET)
- Dr. Nguyen Thi Phuong Mai, Vice Director of ITP, Hanoi University of Technology (HUT)
- Dr. Dang Ngoc Duc, Banking and Finance Faculty, Hanoi National Economics University (NEU)
- Dr. Nguyen Song Hoan, Vice Rector, Hong Duc University (HDU), Thanh Hoa Province
- Mr. Do Quoc Trung, Rector, Kien Giang Community College (KGCC), Kien Giang Province
- Dr. Tran Nguyen Thy Binh, CEO, American Pacific University (APU), HCM City

Andrew Tran noted that the speakers on the panel were chosen from a wide range of higher educational institutions in Vietnam, public and private, national and provincial. They have been invited here to share their results as well as lessons-learned in their American-Vietnamese partnership with the California State University system (CSU).

Andrew Tran addressed the CSU partnership in the Advanced Programs (AP) at the Vietnamese higher education institutions sponsored by MOET, the College Faculty Preparation Program (CFPP) prospectively offered by CSU, articulation programs, and the effort in expanding some selected AP to other Vietnamese colleges/universities. In addition, he also posed the following questions for discussions in this Session:

- How successful have American-Vietnamese partnerships been between CSU and its Vietnamese University partners?
- What are some of the successes to date?
- What are some of the challenges now and in the foreseeable future?

Speaker #1: Dr. å guyen Thi Le Huong of MOET yielded her time, informed of the recent MOU signed in June 2008 between CSU and MOET, and asked that the panelist speakers share their lessons learned (what works and what doesn't) in order to distill best practices to help the community of higher education grow and develop with promise and success.

Speaker #2: Dr. å guyen Thi Phuong Mai of HUT, who was responsible for the AP Mechatronic Engineering in cooperation with CSU Chico, reported the following:

Successes:

- The launching of HUT's articulation programs with CSU Chico and San Jose campus, and the amazing collaboration and support from the CSU Chancellor's Office. She believes that HUT was very 'lucky' to have such a great partnership with CSU campuses. Together, they were able to reach an articulation agreement with CSU Chico (based on prior agreements HUT have had with CSU San Jose campus) in 6 months. Similar agreement was also achieved with San Jose for the AP Electrical Engineering partnership.
- CSU Chico currently accepts a number of transferable credits from HUT. (Andrew Tran noted that this is the only one of formal articulation agreement to date between a CSU campus and a Vietnamese university).

Challenges:

• Without funding support from MOET, the Advanced Programs at HUT would not be possible. So, the question before us is not only just about need and implementation but also about sustainability (i.e. ability to pay acceptable salaries to CSU's and other American professors who may be open to coming to Vietnam on a teaching assignment).

Discussion:

A question/concern was raised regarding the threats of HUT 'losing' too many AP students to study abroad. However, Dr. Mai reassured the audience that would not be a problem due to HUT's limited funding and scholarships for the study program abroad (10 scholarships for every 200 students).

A comment was raised regarding the issue of faculty shortage and that the Vietnamese American professors may be an un-tapped resources. Andrew Tran commented that he has compiled a list of over 200 names of Vietnamese American Professors living overseas that he has circulated the list to MOET and other partner universities for possible recruitment.

Speaker #3: Dr. Dang å goc Duc from the Hanoi å ational Economics University (å EU) reported on the following: Successes:

- In-Take: first round of 'in-take' totaled 81 students; the 2nd round: 74 students; and the third round: 53 students. Dr. Duc cautioned us not to be alarmed by the declining numbers. It is merely a result of better front-end screening.
- Dr. Duc also shared that along with "heartfelt support" from CSU Long Beach over the three-year old partnership, å EU has now a program curriculum that

- is almost identical to that of the CSU Long Beach's College of Business Administration (CBA).
- In addition, å EU also invited guest lecturers from Australia and England as well as Vietnamese PhD candidates, who had been trained abroad, to meet her teaching needs for the AP at å EU.

Challenges:

- Future plans include an internship program in the U.S. and boost in American Professors recruitment. Though the question still remains: "without a competitive salary base, why American faculty should be interested in accepting teaching assignments in Vietnam?"
- As it stands, with funding support from MOET, å EU's AP students pays approximately 900,000 Vietnamese Dong (or about \$50.00 U.S. Dollars) per month in tuition. The question again is sustainability after MOET's funding runs out.

Discussion:

There was a suggestion from the audience for a College Faculty Program where Vietnamese Professors could go abroad to learn best-practices in teaching methodologies. Mr. Andrew Tran shared the information that MOET has had contacted him and inquired about the CSU's CFPP which could be possibly carried out in Vietnam and at CSU partner campus upon request.

Speaker #4: Dr. å guyen Song Hoan, Vice Rector of the provincial Hong Duc University (HDU) at Thanh Hoa reported on the following: Plans:

- Plan to build a new 50 hectare campus and satellite community colleges with a provincial budget of \$50 million U.S. dollars. He noted that provincial universities like HDU rely mostly on their provincial budget not MOET's.
- Plan to send between 50 to 70 Masters and PhD level students overseas in 2009 with HDU's and provincial scholarships, and more each year of the next five year period as part of the program for HDU's faculty and the provincial staff development.
- Dr. Hoan also spoke of a proposed plan of AP collaboration with å EU and HUT in the very near future, maximizing the benefits of the partners' AP in place, to send those who cannot or chose not to go abroad to be able to transfer to the domestic å EU and HUT. Other students could also pursue additional education at CSU campus partners per their choices.
- HDU currently seeks teaching assistance from CSU to improve their selected candidates' English skills prior to departure for study overseas, and to implement a TESL/TESOL program at the new and modern facility of teaching and learning ESL/ESOL at HDU. In addition, HDU will soon submit a selected AP for HDU through cooperation with CSU.

Challenges:

English Language fluency remains a major barrier. Currently, HDU runs a 10-month English Language Program that's taught 50% by native English Speakers and 50% by Vietnamese teachers who have degrees in English speaking countries. In 2008, HDU sent half of their trained candidates, who

- had achieved English proficiency from the English training, to study abroad but none of them made to CSU due to lack of GMATs and GREs to be taken.
- Andrew Tran concurred that not only is English fluency a barrier, but also graduate school entrance exams such as the GRE (Graduate Record Examination) and the GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) to be better prepared at HDU. He recommended the English training program should include also preparatory training for taking GMATs and GREs successfully.

Speaker #5: *Mr. Do Quoc Trung of Keen Giang Community College (KGCC)* reported on the following: Successes:

- Located in the southern tip of Vietnam, KGCC is in a key position to assist new industries that are taking root in the community and vicinities. KGCC is a one among the twelve community colleges of the Vietnamese Association of Community Colleges (VACC) to date.
- KGCC is the only Vietnamese institution member of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) that has had cooperation with AACC partners such as Mohawk Valley CC, Richland College, Jefferson CC to name a few through projects funded by USAID.
- KGCC has received continuous English training assistance offered by Princeton University and Fulbright Vietnam to KGCC students. KGCC has also collaboration with Texas Tech University.
- KGCC has been in contact with CSU for assistance with development. Through CSU Chancellor's Office, a "College and Industry" partnership was achieved at KGCC to establish the local Cisco å etworking Academy at KGCC to benefit students via e-learning of IT Essentials and professional network career training.
- As assisted by CSU, KGCC has attempted a pilot project where the AP curriculum, which resulted from the partnership between å EU and CSU Long Beach, would be extended at KGCC as a model AP curriculum in Business Administration at KGCC.

Challenges:

- The concept of "community colleges" in Vietnam is still very new and slowly accepted with lack of adequate experience and proper guidance from the government. KGCC's curricula are still based upon the 3-year plan of the common 3-year junior colleges in Vietnam.
- Proficiency in English is a challenge to both students and faculty at KGCC and the near-by schools. KGCC hopes to receive assistance with faculty development for teaching in English the subjects of the piloting AP through the CFPP in partnership with CSU and the local university partners.

Speaker #6: *Dr. Tran Nguyen Thy Binh*, CEO, American Pacific University (APU) reported on the following:

Successes:

• Our model American program has helped students prepared for integration into American Universities with ease. We are the first American institution to

- receive licensing from MOET for K–12 American Programming (with an American curriculum and full instruction in English).
- We have a proven track record of success as the solid gateway to American Universities: of over 2,000 students sent abroad to U.S. Universities through APU's network of support; 85% of APU'S current graduates made the Dean's list in their first quarter abroad (Fall 2008) at various higher learning institutions that include: CSU campus at East Bay, Long Beach; Roger Williams University; Portland State University; Central Washington University; Princeton. (At Central Washington University in particular, 100% of APU's graduates made the Dean's list).
- APU has recently received pre-approval from MOET to open the first American University in Vietnam! APU would welcome its first group of university students at an initial site at Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) for the school year of 2009-2010.

Future Plans:

- APU will have a permanent campus and university village at HCMC. The university also plans currently for its satellite campuses at the highland city at Da Lat, in the central Vietnam at Da å ang province, and a HCMC suburban area.
- University Programming would include:
 - ❖ Bachelors Degree: 2+2: First 2 years of study in Vietnam and the remaining 2 years abroad in the U.S to complete the degree. Conversely, American students may opt to complete their first two years in the U.S. and the last two years at APU in Vietnam for an accredited U.S. University Degree Aå D
 - ❖ Masters Degree 1+1: Students will be able continue their higher education in a graduate program through APU and its partner universities, either in Vietnam or the U.S., or both, in the following disciplines: Business Administration, Architecture, Information Systems and Technology (IST), å ursing and pre-medical school sciences, Hospitality Management.
 - ❖ While Aviation Maintenance Management is one of the first two curricula to be implemented, APU is working on collaborating with CSU Long Beach for a å ursing program that is encompassed of both university level curriculum and short-term professional training.

Challenges:

Our organization is experiencing exponential growth. Recruitment and retention of qualified Vietnamese staff with adequate experience and fluency in English remains a challenge.

Andrew Tran closed-out the informal discussion with sincere thanks to the panelists and audience for their participation.

Breakout Session 1B: Helping Vietnam To Develop Emerging Science and Technology

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Vo Van Toi, Executive Director, Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF). Email: toivo@vef.gov

Introduction

Pursuing an emerging field is crucial for Vietnam. Indeed, the international community is way ahead and advancing rapidly in long-established traditional engineering such as Civil, Electrical, Chemical and Mechanical Engineering. A developing country like Vietnam would need to invest a lot of effort, time and resources merely to catch up time lost. The hope to become a world leader in these fields may thus be realized only after several generations. By contrast, putting resources into an evolving and emerging technology will allow Vietnamese researchers to contribute to its current progress as well as to establish their own unique attributes. Vietnam has embarked on many emerging fields such as biotech and nanotech. In this break out discussion, the participants' opinions about what emerging fields they think important for Vietnam, the reasons why they think these fields are important and most importantly how they think these fields must be implemented in an effective and sustainable way. The 4 questions as "food for thought" were asked, which are not limited in the framework of VEF. The numbers in the parentheses show the number of participants who have the same idea.

1. What are the emerging science and technology fields that Vietnam needs to develop in the next 5 to 10 years? Why?

- Biotechnology (4)
- Energy and renewable energy (4)
- IT (3)
- Biomedical (2)
- Environmental science (2)
- Advanced (building) materials
- Automation
- Food technology
- Interdisciplinary research and education
- Light manufacturing in both hi-tech and low-tech goods
- Manufacturing
- Material technology
- â anotechnology
- Semi-conduct production
- Social sciences: e.g. political ecology
- Sustainability
- Telecommunication
- Vietnam does not need to develop anything Vietnam needs to master the basics; Vietnam should apply properly the already advanced technologies.

• With this issue, the majority falls on biotechnology, energy and renewable energy, biomedical and environment sciences and technologies. Some others thought that Vietnam needs to develop nanotechnology, automation, food technology, manufacturing etc. Especially, some people assumed that "advances on technology ought not ignore the need to advance the social sciences so that Vietnam can manage the changes equitably and safely." Some even said that Vietnam would need to master the basics or apply the advanced technologies properly rather than develop them.

2. How can you/VEF help raise the awareness of Vietnam higher education institutions and academicians concerning these emergent fields and help to effectively implement these?

- VEF needs to channel the Fellowship money to train both leaders and trainers; establishing priorities for funding within VEF
- Helping Vietnam establish extensive joint research projects
- Via website
- Via specific conferences/ seminars
- Incorporating the emerging demands into undergraduate curricula
- Sending students to graduate programs
- Enhancing the current VEF exchange programs (Vietnamese faculty going abroad and foreigner faculty coming to Vietnam)
- Faculty should establish connections with leading faculty, scholarly organizations, universities in other countries that are at the forefront of research
- Choosing the right people to carry out scientific research

3. How can you/VEF help motivate U.S. scientists to effectively collaborate with Vietnamese counterparts for the purpose of developing the emerging science and technology fields in Vietnam higher education?

- Encouraging Vietnam government to develop a more accommodating environment to attract talents to Vietnam
- Developing database by discipline or technology field
- Identifying Viet Kieu scientists in relevant fields
- Encouraging the US scientist by facilitating with research grants and laboratories
- Providing resources to send graduate students to U.S. research labs
- Having the US scientist visit Vietnam
- Establishing joint research
- Finding overlapping interests, sending Vietnamese students to the U.S. for PhDs, maintaining connections and finding ways to encourage their former U.S. mentors to come to Vietnam and working with their former students and trying to get U.S. universities to support such programs.

- 4. How can Vietnamese students at the undergraduate level be prepared to successfully complete for admission to prestigious U.S. graduate programs that are well known for their leadership in the emerging science and technology fields?
 - Students' good English skills/high TOFEL score (2)/ good command of scientific terminologies, GRE, ABET accreditation (3), and other skills required in the U.S. graduate programs
 - o Advanced research skills
 - o Data mining
 - o Thinking IQ
 - o Understanding U.S. admission procedure
 - o Being able to finding relevant professors in the same field
 - o Having good communication skills
 - o Using team building approach
 - Functional organizations were also expected to get involved in this issue by sending a group of students to one university and having them work on a shared problem relevant to Vietnam
 - Revising curricula
 - Establishing exchange programs/ a bridge program of 1-7 years after a BA's degree to work at U.S. universities to gain further knowledge and capacity before students formally enter PhD programs

In addition to the points mentioned above, the Vietnamese Government needs to grant permission to foreigners, Vietnamese overseas with adequate resources to establish higher education institutions to provide education in Vietnam. By this way, more Vietnamese people can access good quality higher education and can do that in an affordable way.

Breakout Session 1C: ICT Human Resource Development and Capacity Building

Moderators: Donald å ay, Commercial Counselor, U.S. Embassy, Hanoi Dr. Tran Duc Lai, Vice Minister of Information and Communications

I. Welcome and Opening Statements:

Commercial Counselor Nay:

- Welcome to the session
- One of 7 core areas of US-Vå ICT Dialogue is ICT HRD in Vietnam. Today's session is Academic Advisory Group Meeting of the ICT Dialogue
- ICT development is the engine that can drive Vå economy. Parallels to India are many lessons can be learned to drive Vå economy forward.

Vice Minister Lai

- We hope to exchange views on how to elevate ICT education in Vietnam and make important connections for future dialogue.
- MIC spent the morning at Intel to discuss the training of IT workers. "We are looking to solve the Intel problem." (i.e. not enough qualified IT and engineering professionals.)
- MIC is interested in hearing ideas on how to actualize an ICT University in Vietnam. MIC has been given the mandate by PM Dung to develop an ICT university

II. **Presentation: "ICT Human Resources Development: The Key to Development and Success."** Trieu Minh Long, MIC International Relations Department

- MIC Goals and Accomplishments:
 - o Facilitate development of the ICT industry
 - o Improve teaching resources
 - Establish funding mechanisms- foreign partners to play/are playing important role
 - Attracting funding from around the world- An IT college is being established in Danang for 200-300 students, being co-funded from Korea and Vietnam.
- Shorter-term MIC Priorities:
 - o Capacity building MIC staff: Policy and regulatory capabilities and skills, particularly for senior officials and officials in the provinces.
 - Establish the Vietnam å ational University for Information and Communications
 - Ways in which US institutions/private sector can add value to these goals/objectives and partnership opportunities:
 - Provide/update curriculum
 - Assist with infrastructure- financial and brick and mortar
 - Partnerships- joint ventures

O US companies or universities interested in pursuing opportunities can contact Vice Minister Dr. Tran Duc Lai at tdlai@mic.gov.vn.

III. Panel Discussion- Stakeholder Perspectives on ICT HRD Development in Vietnam.

Michael Mudd - Director of Public Policy, Asia- CompTia

- A major global focus for CompTia globally is filling the IT pipeline- their focus is on the "IT plumbers"- rather than the PhDs and Masters level professional. 9 out of 10 IT jobs are not at IT companies. Making the business infrastructure run is the key to making an economy grow.
- CompTia is therefore focused on entry level skills. CompTia runs the largest non product specific certification program in the world. The trade association is currently pursuing a certification pilot with MIC and is developing a testing system to match the certification standards.
- Basic Recommendation to MIC: Focus on the entry level skills.

Nguyen The Trung – Managing Director of DTT Software and Founding Member of the Vietnamese Software Engineering Group (SEG)

- SEG is a Vietnamese private sector initiative organized to address the HRD training issue. SEG has contracted with Carnegie Mellon University to implement CMU's IT certification curriculum at private universities in Hanoi, HCMC and Danang.
- When developing IT training programs, it is important to select curriculum that will be valid 5 years down the road. This is important, because the needs are changing rapidly.
- Investment is required to get the correct curriculum, but the investments will pay off.

Dr. Tung X. Bui – Director of the Pacific Research Institutue for Information Management Systems, Shidler College of Business, University of Hawaii

- It is true that the lion's share of IT jobs are outside of IT companies and the real challenge is educating enough IT people to run infrastructure outside of IT companies.
- Congrats to MIC and Vå for the dramatic growth in Internet penetration.
- MIC should focus efforts in three areas:
 - o More sophisticated use of the Internet. Today most Vå use the internet to access information. However, e-commerce will accelerate economic growth dramatically if the country can build the infrastructure to do so.
 - Don't fall into the trap of trying to use labor to increase productivity as many developing countries do. Just because labor is cheap does not mean it can create the productivity increases that technology can. IT use is the key.
 - MIC focus should be on IT applications. How can Vietnam use IT to grow all industry sectors? i.e. to make the banking sector more mature. The business of business is to things more efficiently and this is where the focus of training should reside.

o Dr. Bui did a study for APEC on recommendations for developing the IT Sector. Any participant can get a copy by emailing him at tungb@hawaii.edu. Dr. Bui will present a copy to the Minister during a one-on-one meeting with him later.

Lorien Hamilton - Director of Operations at TRG International

- TRG uses Vå staff to deliver products and services around the world.
- TRG often finds that soft skills are lacking in the workforce- i.e. management and troubleshooting. Further, the company sees demand outstripping supply for qualified workers.
- The biggest gap in the educational system is between what the student has achieved on paper and what they can actually do in a work setting, which is why the company and others like it have developed aggressive internship programs.

Vice Minister Lai -

- Our challenge is to improve the quality of HRD in the ICT field.
- I ask the panelists and universities and companies in the audience- What should MIC do to develop a university of information and communication?
- How can industry, universities and MIC cooperate to move forward on the PM's mandate? We want to have more cooperation from U.S. universities.
- How do we bring up the quality of MIC staff?

Question and Answer Session:

- 1. Ian Little- Virginia Commonwealth University. VCU is working with the Kingdom Saudia Arabia on development plans to create a couple of universities in Saudia Arabia. Their government has committed \$25 million to the project.
 - Question: What can U.S. universities do for you? What does a model partnership program look like to MIC?
 - Answer (Dr. Lai): This is a good question. We need assistance with creating IT standards. We also need to look at creative ways to change the method of teaching and training. We are open to exploring ideas with any university.
- 2. Hanh Le-Griffen- University of Southern California It is true that IT skills are in huge demand outside of IT. I have been working on port projects in Vietnam, and there is simply no integration between ports, even when they are located in the same locale. As part of development partnerships, MIC should pursue options of having industry come in and teach IT skills for specific applications such as port integration.
 - o Answer: VM Lai- "This is a good suggestion, and we welcome companies to contact us for specific needs and partnership ideas.
 - For next steps, since we are running out of time, I encourage companies and universities seeking opportunities to contact me at the Ministry at <u>tdlai@mic.gov.vn</u>.

Breakout Session 2C: Building Up Science and Technology into a Vietnamese Private International University: Priorities and Challenges

Moderator: Madame Ton å u Thi å inh, President, Tri Viet International University Project Founding Committee

PRESENTATION CONTENT

Mme Ton Nu Thi Ninh, President of Tri Viet's Founding Committee started the session with a comprehensive introduction of Tri Viet International University's Founders' vision of creating a quality private university dedicated to public service. The biggest factor limiting Viet å am's economic growth and development as well as its international integration being the shortage of an educated and skilled workforce, TRI VIET aims to produce a qualified workforce for the socio-economic needs of the country, who will also be responsible citizens. With a trans-disciplinary approach and student-centered pedagogy, Tri Viet also ambitions to embody the notion of "green" university in all aspects: infrastructure, resource, governance, management, academics, and campus lifestyle.

A 2008 market survey done for Tri Viet shows that key areas prioritized by Vietnamese students are: foreign languages (mostly English), business administration, hospitality, information technology, electrical engineering and microelectronics, media and communications. The four schools planned for the first phase of development (to 2020) are the School of Languages, School of Communications and Design, School of Management, and School of Engineering and Technology. The campus will also have two research and exchange centers (Center of International Studies and Center of Asian Studies) providing the necessary linkage and balance between learning/teaching and research.

Along with Liberal Arts subjects (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, teamwork skills, etc.) required for the development of future generation of leaders, science and technology is fundamental to a higher education establishment in today's globalized world. Although the costs of setting up a school of engineering are quite high for a private university, Tri Viet's vast and diverse network of academic, professional and business connections inside and outside Viet å am is an important enabling factor. Mme å inh concluded her presentation by stressing the importance of fostering science and technology and of embedding research in Tri Viet from the very initial phase after the University's launch in late 2011.

Dr. Dong thi Bich Thuy from the Information Technology Department, Ho Chi Minh City University of å atural Sciences, elaborated on Tri Viet's rationale for setting up a School of Engineering and Technology: Viet å am has an acute shortage of qualified workforce in sciences and technology; Tri Viet aims to be a multi-disciplinary institution. Focus will be on subjects like EE, Computer Science, CE, Microelectronics, Applied Biology, Environmental Sciences, and Alternative/Renewable Energy. The School of Engineering & Technology will be developed in two phases: Phase I for Education concentration, and Phase II for Education &

Research. Dr. Thuy stressed the need to have a Research and Development Center at the university, which will be the necessary link between academia and industry. Quality education needs good faculty, and quality faculty needs to conduct research. Dr. Thuy also raised the issues of raising funds for research, designing of a sound research budget and contributions from corporations. Lastly, Dr. Thuy emphasized the importance of attracting Vietnamese scientists from overseas and keeping them motivated.

DISCUSSION MAIN POINTS

On establishing a science and technology school from the get-go:

- It is very difficult to start with a school of engineering due to its unique requirements: students need to be very smart and the equipment is very expensive. It was hard for the Hanoi University of Technology even with support from the Ministry of Education & Training.
- A number of Vietnamese instructors need to improve on English-language and soft skills. What is Tri Viet's strategy for recruiting and training of faculty?
- A crucial task for all schools is not only to find qualified and competent faculty but also to keep motivating them.
- Vietnamese corporations, in particular those dealing with science and technology, should be approached for contributions to education and training in the country.

On the need to teach liberal arts together with science and technology:

- To transplant excellence from an established foreign school is beneficial but some "localization" is required. How much of the original model should be kept and how much localization is needed?
- Focus on sciences only might be too narrow. A fundamental question for educators has been, should education serve the purpose of finding a good job only, or should it aim to produce well-rounded intellectuals? One of the answers might be not to create stand-alone science programs but to teach young people to adapt to changing work requirements and to different circumstances in life (Mme å inh: we totally agree with the importance of liberal arts education and its role in shaping up a citizen of the world. Tri Viet will also develop Vietnamese Studies as a core subject for all students).
- One has to have not only high quality but uniqueness. Tri Viet has a unique opportunity since it is totally new. A suggested way would be to take up one global issue to study a year and get the whole school behind it, so a Tri Viet graduate would have grappled with at least four major global issues in his undergraduate life.
- The industry needs people who can think for themselves, have clear writing skills, creativity and teamwork spirit. Employers look for technical <u>and</u> soft skills. The present financial crisis is almost a window of opportunity for Viet å am. Tri Viet should aim to deliver all-around professionals with the two kinds of skills.

On The Need to Have Research Projects

- Sequencing is logical but research should not be delayed too long as it is an important factor in the maintenance of faculty quality. Research is important but should be relevant to the country's needs.

- A good school should prepare students for the industry's requirements but not limit itself to that. A beginning of research activities at the undergraduate level can help students learn and improve critical thinking, problem solving and other soft skills.
- Can private universities in Viet å am access government funds for scientific research?

Technical training in Viet å am does not answer industry needs. Retraining is costly and hiring foreigners for management positions is very costly.

LIST OF SESSION PARTICIPANTS

- 1. Dr. John Vaughn, Association of American Universities (AAU)
- 2. Ms. Seema Agarwal-Harding, USAID
- 3. Mr. Howard Handler, USAID
- 4. Dr. Allan E. Goodman, Institute of International Education
- 5. Dr. Terance W. Bigalke, Education Division, East-West Center
- 6. Mr. Karl Theisen, Arizona State University (ASU)
- 7. Dr. Gil Latz, Portland State University (PSU)
- 8. Mr. Paul Brown, *Portland State University (PSU)*
- 9. Dr. Andrew Tran, California State University System
- 10. Mr. å guyen Tam, California State University Fullerton
- 11. Dr. Ted Cummings, University of Houston Clear Lake
- 12. Mr. Terry Weidner, University of Montana
- 13. Dr. Linda Yarr, George Washington University
- 14. Dr. Vo Van Toi, Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF)
- 15. Ms. å guyen Thi Thanh Phuong, Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF)
- 16. Mr. Lam Hau, VSource International Corporation, Training & Sourcing Semiconductor Engineers
- 17. Ms. Karen Bennet, Consortium Global Education (CGE)
- 18. Ms. Tu Packard, Moody's
- 19. Mr. John H. Le Van, US-Vietnam Foundation
- 20. Dr. Pham Thi Ly, CIECER, TVIU's Academic Advisor
- 21. Mr. å guyen Hoang Minh Tam, HCMC International University
- 22. Dr. â guyen Hong Linh, HCMC International University
- 23. Mr. å go Thanh Hoan, HCMC International University
- 24. Ms. å guyen Thi Mai Phuong, Hanoi University of Technology
- 25. Ms. Tran Thu Ha, HCMC University of Technical Education
- 26. Dr. Do Hong Tuan, HCMC University of Technology
- 27. Mme. Ton å u Thi å inh, TVIU's Founding Committee
- 28. Mr. Pham å hu Ho, TVIU's Founding Committee
- 29. Dr. Dong Thi Bich Thuy, Faculty of IT, University of Science, TVIU's Academic Advisor
- 30. Dr. Tran Thuong Tuan, TVIU's Founding Committee
- 31. Dr. Tran Ha Anh, TVIU's Founding Committee
- 32. Dr. å guyen Le Trang, TVIU's Academic Advisor

For More Information, please contact:

Jim Warren, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy, Hanoi

Tel: 844-3850-5194 Cell: 8490-342-4997 WarrenJA@state.gov

Bernice Clark, Education Coordinator, U.S. Embassy, Hanoi

Cell: 8490-463-3131 Clark b h@yahoo.com

å guyen Thanh Hien, Office Assistant, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Hanoi

Tel: 844-3850-5177 Cell: 8490-406-8089 nguyentx@state.gov